

THE STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL
EDUCATION.

THE STRUGGLE

FOR



NATIONAL EDUCATION

BY

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NOTE.

ABOUT three-fourths of the following pages have already appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*. This portion has been carefully revised.

The remaining part—beginning with Section XIV., page 133—in which the writer discusses the expediency of making the elementary schools free, has not been printed before.

In an Appendix the reader will find extracts from the Elementary Education ~~Act~~ of 1870, as well as from the regulations of the Education Department. This may help to make the features of the existing system clearer to those who are not already familiar with it. Finally, as a means of financial comparison, the education budget of the city of Chicago has been placed at the end of the volume.

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THE STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL EDUCATION.

I.

WE are constantly told by supercilious and inconsiderate Liberals that the present aspect of the question of national education in England is only a new version of the old quarrel between conventicle and steeple-house. The complaints against the Twenty Fifth clause are set down to the resentment of a religious faction. The cry for universal School-boards is explained by the spleen of dissent. The denunciation of Mr. Forster as a renegade from the principles of those Puritan ancestors of whom he made such untimely boast, is traced to the mortifications of nonconformist vanity and arrogance. The whole controversy is narrowed to the ancient story of rival churches and wrangling sects. Even Mr. Fawcett, in his new and slightly diverting character of "moderate churchman," is refreshed by a Conservative cheer for imputing sectarian aims to the very men who advocate national education and the absolute exclusion of denominational interests.

Now even if this were a true account of the matter, a Liberal might still think twice before making up his mind that there is no more to be said, nor any reason why he should take sides with one of the disputants more than with the other. He would do well to reflect that it is as unsafe to bring an indictment against a whole sect as against a whole nation. If dissenters and churchmen have thus drawn themselves off into two great camps, now both of them alive with the hum of war and giving dreadful note of preparation, there is presumably some very real and substantial prize at issue. Energetic dissenters and energetic churchmen know very well what they are about. No great body of Englishmen will take trouble and spend money and face the wear and tear of forming an  and conducting a long campaign, just to gratify a resentment or air a grievance. Those who assert that all this is done at the bidding of a clique must, in the face of all history, believe the dissenter to be a man of much docility and very little common sense. They can moreover have paid no attention to the actual evidence of the universality of the movement. As a body, the non-conformists are staunch and active in their hostility to the measure which a sounder and an older Liberal than Mr. Gladstone has described as the worst measure passed by any Liberal government since 1832.

A second reflection naturally suggests itself to any one who looks at the controversy seriously. Supposing that the present struggle is primarily and on

the surface a fresh outbreak of the old feud between church and chapel, which of the two parties to the feud is from its antecedents the more likely to be now fighting on the side of political progress? We are not talking of the minor social graces, nor of literature, nor of speculation, nor of æsthetic contributions to our national life, nor of anything else except purely political action. Putting all the polemics of theology and ecclesiastical discipline aside, which of the two parties has done most for freedom and good government and equal laws in England? Apart from the present issue, is the political tradition of nonconformity or the political tradition of the state church, the wiser, the nobler, the more enlightened, the more beneficent? Let history answer. Its voice is clear and beyond mistake. This is not a single crisis in the growth of English liberties in which the state church has not been the champion of retrogression and obstruction. Yes, there was one. In 1688, when her own purse and privilege were threatened, she did for a short space enlist under the flag which the nonconformists had raised in older and harder days; immediately after, when with their aid and on their principles the oppressor had been driven out, she reverted by a sure instinct to her own base doctrines of passive obedience and persecuting orthodoxy.

Yet this is the brightest episode in her political history. In every other great crisis she has made herself the ally of tyranny, the organ of social oppression, the champion of intellectual bondage. In the

sixteenth century, the bishops of the state church became the joyful instruments of Elizabeth's persecution, and in their courts the patriotic loyalty of the Puritan was rewarded with the pillory, the prison, the branding-iron, the gallows. In the seventeenth century, the state church made her cause one with the cause of the Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission, with prerogative and benevolences, with absolutism and divine right. The nonconformists shed their blood for law and ordered freedom. The church, when she returned to 'exalt her mitred front in court and parliament,' retaliated on them for their services in the great cause which she has always persecuted when she could, and always denounced when she could not persecute, and bitterly suspected when she has been unable to persecute and ashamed to denounce, by urging on the most vindictive legislation that defaced the English statute book even in the evil days of the Restoration. She preached passive obedience with an industry that would have been apostolic, if only its goal had been the elevation instead of the debasement of human nature. When that doctrine became inconvenient, she put it aside for a while, but as we have seen, she speedily relapsed into the maxims of absolute non-resistance when power and privilege once more seemed safe. The Revolution was no sooner accomplished than the state clergy turned Jacobite, deliberately repudiated the principles of the Revolution which they had helped to make, and did their best to render the

Hanoverian succession impossible before it came to pass, and unpopular after. When George III. came to the throne, and politics took a new departure, the state church clung to her pestilent tradition. Her chiefs were steadfast aiders and abettors in the policy which led to the loss of the American colonies; and then in the policy which led to the war with the French republic. The evil thread of this monotonous tale has been unbroken down to the last general election. That election turned upon the removal of an odious and futile badge of ascendancy from the Irish nation. The dissenters were to a man on one side, and the dignitaries of the church almost to a man on the other. All this, it may be said, is an old story. It is so; but if we are told that the present struggle for national education is only a repetition of an old battle, it is worth while to steady our judgment by reminding ourselves what that old battle has been about. The story may be trite, but the moral is not yet out of date.

Nobody pretends that the state church alone is answerable for all the iniquities and follies of legislation and policy in which she has taken a leading part during the three centuries of her existence. The majority of the nation must share the responsibilities of the laws of the Restoration, of such outbreaks as the Sacheverell riots, of the war against freedom in America, and the war against freedom in France. The active leaders of the state church had no monopoly of intolerance or coarseness or ferocity or hatred

of light. No one asserts anything so extravagant as this. What is true, and a very important truth, is that the state church has never resisted or moderated these coarse, ferocious, intolerant, and obstructive political impulses in the nation; that, on the contrary, she has stimulated and encouraged them, and where she could, has most unflinchingly turned them to her own profit. The clergy have not been the only enemies that freedom and light have had in our country; but the enemies of freedom and light have always found the clergy ready to lend unction to their own bad causes, and eager to dress up obscurantism and servility in preacher's phrases and Bible precedents. Nor again, does any one pretend that either high forms of spiritual life or noble sons have been wanting to the Anglican establishment. A Christian nature is a generous soil, even in the baleful climate of a state church. But it is her noblest sons, from Jeremy Taylor down to Maurice, who have ever found their church the most cheerless of stepmothers. It is not they who have shared her power, or shaped her policy, or exalted a mitred front in court and parliament. They have ever been inside the church what the nonconformists have been outside. Alas, they have been too few and too weak. Their names are rightly held in honour among men of all persuasions, but they have been neither numerous enough nor powerful enough to turn aside the verdict of the impartial student that the political history of our episcopal establishment, alike in England, in Scotland, and in

Ireland, has been one long and unvarying course of resolute enmity to justice, enlightenment, and freedom.

Dissent, it is true, offers little that touches the fastidious and sentimental love, which is so much in fashion in our times, for the picturesque, the gorgeous, the romantic, the sweetly reasonable. Its creeds are said to be narrow, its spirit contentious, its discipline unscriptural, its ritual bleak, its votaries plebeian. As politicians we need not greatly exercise ourselves in these high matters. Intellectual coxcombry and social affectation are welcome to expatiate upon them at length. The dissenters have not been favourably placed for the acquisition of the more delicate graces. To stand in the pillory, to have your ears slit, to lie in bishops' prisons, to be driven forth by the hundred from home and sustenance, to be hunted with Five Mile Acts, Conventicle Acts, Test Acts, Schism Acts, —the memory of these things may well leave a tincture of sourness in the descendants of those who suffered them, and a tincture of impatience with the bland teachers who invite them to contrast their pinched theology and sullen liturgies with 'the modest splendour, the unassuming state, the mild majesty,' of the church that afflicted and persecuted them. Dissent is not picturesque, but it possesses a heroic political record. It has little in the way of splendour and state, but it has a consistent legend of civil enlightenment. It may lack mild majesty, but it has always shown honest instincts.

II.

If this, then, be a true reading of the past, as it is assuredly the reading of our most competent students of the past, there is a fair reason why we should expect to find the dissenters on the right side in the issues of the present. If in old days war between the churchman and nonconformist was often in reality a war between the forces of political progress and the forces of political reaction, we may perhaps find on looking a little more closely that it is the same conflict which rages now. It is worth while to penetrate below the surface of an agitation that at first and on the top does not appear to go beyond recalcitrancy against the Twenty Fifth section of the Education Act of 1870. This section, as everybody now knows only too well, enables School-boards to pay the school-pence of the children of indigent parents at whatever school, denominational or otherwise, the indigent parents may select. Now the total amount contributed to the support of denominational schools under the Twenty Fifth clause in the year 1872, was no more than the trifling sum of £5,070 and a few shillings, and of this £5,070 no less than £3,405 were paid in Manchester and Salford alone, leaving some £1,665 as the amount devoted to the obnoxious purpose for all the rest of England. We may be sure that there would be no such storm as has raged about this paltry sum, unless it represented a principle which would sanction the devotion of far more

portentous amounts to sectarian teaching. In truth it is only the key to a position. It is a small matter. So was the yeoman's house at Hougomont, and so were Hampden's twenty shillings. The sophists of the press ridicule the dissenters and secularists for raising such pertinacious clamour over so insignificant a payment. They do not choose to see that the insignificance of the payment is just as much a matter of reproach to those who insist upon it, as to those who protest against it. If it is frivolous and absurd to breed feud and disturbance in order to suppress it, why is it any less so to breed feud and disturbance in order to maintain it? There is no better proof of the lethargy and indifference which the long growing decrepitude of the government has thrown over the spirits of politicians outside the two sectarian camps, than the fact that it is possible for writers or speakers to maintain that hostility to the Education Act has no wider or more positive foundation than the cession of five thousand pounds per annum to denominational schools. As we shall see in another place, the opponents of the Act are not wholly to blame for this most unfortunate misrepresentation of their real aims and substantial objections. The Twenty Fifth clause is the tiniest element in an enormous process of denominational endowment. The concentration of hostility upon this minor piece of injustice and impolicy—a concentration that was perhaps inevitable under the circumstances—has given the defenders of the Act a pretext for forgetting that we complain of the

injustice and impolicy of the whole. Such curtailment of the true proportions of the controversy has robbed it of all interest to an immense number of those who would have been inspired with zealous interest, if they had seen in the struggle for national education, what it really is, one of the highest and widest issues in the public policy of our own or any other modern state.¹

¹ I append a statement of the case for the agitation against the Twenty Fifth clause:—

“The fortress to be stormed is sectarianism in education. The government policy has immensely strengthened the position of our opponents: 1st, by the temptation of the six months’ grace, in consequence of which *the number of sectarian schools has been increased about 30 per cent.*; and, 2nd, by the additional grants allowed under the New Revised Code, by which the expense of maintaining these sectarian schools is rendered much less onerous to their clerical friends and managers.

“The building grants are irrevocable. The annual education grants cannot be successfully attacked at present, as the government insist, with the approval of the House, on equality of position as between the Board and sectarian schools, and to reduce the State grant to the former would be to increase the local expenses and make education unpopular. The whole system is only vulnerable at present through the Twenty Fifth clause.

“Again, this clause is a practical grievance, which raises the whole question locally. The annual grants from the Consolidated Fund are confused in the general taxes, and are not present to the mind of the individual when he pays income-tax or drinks beer or tea.

“Further, the importance of this ‘detail’ is seen when we consider the alternative. Mr. Forster says truly, ‘If you mean to have compulsion you must provide for the payment of fees for the poor, and while, as in most country districts, there is only one kind of school, and that a sectarian school, you must pay the fees to these denominational institutions.’

“The answer is: Place these schools under the management of popular representatives during the hours of secular instruction; and if you give religious instruction at all, let it be at the cost of those who provide and control it, and under a separate teacher at a distinct time, and then all objection to the Twenty Fifth clause disappears.

“No one will refuse to remit or pay fees in the case of Board schools under the control of the ratepayers; and hence the settlement of this particular controversy can only be effected by the League scheme.”

Here again is Mr. Dale’s way of putting the matter:—

“As soon as School Boards were established it was discovered that the

It is worth while to make an attempt to extricate the question of the educational system of the country from this narrow rut, in which the mere party spirit of some and the indolence of more are well contented that it should be left. It was a very common opinion among Liberals in 1870 that the government had lost one of the most magnificent opportunities that any government ever had, of carrying the nation a long and distinct step in the forward way. Has anything

denominationalists were far more eager to pay the fees of children attending denominational schools than to provide additional school accommodation. The Twenty Fifth clause opened a new source of income for the managers of schools connected with the Church of England and the Church of Rome, and in every part of the country they tried very hard to avail themselves of it. Mr. Forster sustained them. If School Boards provided in their Bye-laws for remitting the fees of poor children attending their own schools, but not for paying the fees of poor children attending denominational schools, the Bye-laws were approved, but the approval was accompanied with a strong letter bearing Mr. Forster's own signature, and declaring that Justice required that the Boards should enable the poor parent to send his child to a school where it would receive the theological teaching the parent desired. On this principle the League joined issue with him. Had Mr. Forster contended that where the Board school was distant from the child's home, and the denominational school near, it would be reasonable to pay the fees, the controversy would have assumed a very different character. Had he said that where there was no Board school at all within an easy distance, it would be impossible to enforce compulsion unless the Board were willing to pay the fees for attendance at a denominational school, there would have been no grave difficulty. But these were not the grounds on which Mr. Forster contended that School Boards were bound to use the powers which the Twenty Fifth clause conferred on them. There might be a Board School within twenty yards of a poor child's home, the denominational school to which, probably under the instigation of a clergyman, a priest, or a Scripture-reader, the parent desired to send it, might be far less efficient, and might be half a mile away, but Mr. Forster contended that Justice required that the Board should pay the fees at the denominational school, in order that the child might receive denominational teaching. To accept denominational schools as a temporary necessity, and to send poor children to them in cases where there are no other schools in which they can be taught, is one thing; but to claim as a matter of justice that these schools should receive aid from the rates, when the children might be taught as well or better in schools under the control of the ratepayers, is a different thing altogether."

happened since to weaken the grounds of such an opinion? On the contrary all that has happened since goes to strengthen them, and the fact that so many thousand children have been got into the schools in consequence of the legislation of 1870, does not in the least affect the contention that they have been got there in the worst possible way, and that the system which sends them there is the least favourable to good instruction, to social concord, to religious equality, and to the sense of public duty and national responsibility. The Panglosses of politics are incessantly crying that all is well now that a slightly larger fraction of the children are finding their way to school. All would still not be well even if that fraction were a great deal larger than it is.

In 1870 there was an opportunity for a thorough settlement of the question, which might not have wholly satisfied the Conservatives, but which would at least have had the merit of carrying out the principles on which the ministerial majority had been returned. Even the Conservatives and churchmen expected such a settlement in a sense contrary to their own wishes. They were prepared to meet and accept it. They knew that this was one of the things which had been meant by their defeat at the polls, and they were ready to make the best of it. The English Liberals, even the most exacting and impatient among them, were fully sensible of the great difficulty and complexity of the subject, but they remembered that the government had already achieved two great

exploits, the Act disestablishing the Irish Church, and the Irish Land Act, each of them more difficult and more complex than the third great task which remained for them to perform. The cabinet did not shrink from dealing with Purchase and the reorganization of the Army as a whole; yet this too was a matter which called for the utmost delicacy towards powerful vested interests, the highest constructive power, and the maximum of administrative skill. People expected the reorganization of education to be dealt with as a whole. It was felt that a minister who had threaded his way with triumph through the two very arduous Irish questions was fully competent to manifest equal grasp, completeness, and firm command of the principles which had stirred the enthusiasm of the constituencies, when he came to the third question, the English question, about which the majority of the new electors cared a great deal more than they cared about the grievances of Ireland.

We know how these expectations were disappointed. An immense agitation had gone on for many years for the purpose of extending the franchise. Vast enthusiasm had been shown at the subsequent elections for the principles and persons of men, whose great cry was religious equality. The victory had at length been achieved, and those who had fought the battle expected to enter into the fruits. Yet the first great English measure which followed all this excitement and all this effort was a bill which Mr. Gathorne Hardy might have devised, and which a Conservative

chamber would not have rejected. Instead of constructing a system which would lean upon public responsibility and duty, the minister gave to the denominational system the most valuable help it has ever had. As if to compensate the Anglican church for the loss of prestige she had sustained by Irish disestablishment, he did his best to hand over to her the elementary education of England.

The original Bill, as Mr. Dale has recently described it, 'provided for the establishment of School-boards, but they were not to be universal; it conferred on School-boards the power of enforcing attendance at school, but that power was permissive, and School-boards might decline to use it. It contained a very inefficient conscience clause, and it permitted the School-boards to make their schools intensely sectarian; there was nothing to hinder the teaching of the Church Catechism or the formularies of the Church of Rome. *It enabled School-boards to give assistance to denominational schools from the rates.* It placed *no limit on the time during which new denominational schools might obtain building grants*; nor did it prevent *new denominational schools* from receiving the same annual grants that were made to existing schools.'

Permissive School-boards, permissive compulsion, permissive supremacy of the strongest sect, proved the feebleness and want of confidence in themselves and the nation, with which the government had shaped their law. But the enormous subsidies which this law gave, and was intended to give to the state

church, showed something worse than feebleness. The ministers professed to make the Board schools unsectarian, and then they encouraged the sectarian schools against them. What was hardly less important, they left the training schools mainly in the hands of the sects, so that almost the only teachers to be procured by the model unsectarian schools were persons brought up in the lines of active sectarianism. To save bare appearances they declared in name for undenominational schools, and then they did their best to enable denominational schools to win a permanent triumph over them. The statesmen who had roused the country by denouncing the ascendancy of a denomination in Ireland, forsook their own cardinal principle in a system for cherishing the ascendancy of a denomination in England. There was a political obliquity in this which far surpassed that of the Conservatives in establishing household suffrage. And Mr. Disraeli had the satisfaction of dishing the Whigs, who were his enemies. Mr. Gladstone, on the other hand, dished the dissenters, who were his friends. Unfortunately he omitted one element of prime importance in these rather nice transactions. He forgot to educate his party.

The result of this one slight oversight has been a serious disaster. It is absurd to charge those who disapprove irreconcilably of the education policy of the government with breaking up the party. It was broken up by the government itself in 1870. The party, as the parliamentary votes of its representatives

in the House of Commons attest, was hostile to the extension of the denominational system. Liberalism in 1868 meant this hostility more than any one other thing. The assumption by the nation of duties which had hitherto been left to the clergy, came foremost among the hopes of those who had been most ardent in the cause of parliamentary reform. It was the first article in that programme of improvement and a higher national life, for which, and for which only, parliamentary reform had ever been sought by sensible men. This was the centre of the party creed. The break-up which we shall see openly consummated in the course of the next few months, was practically effected by the men who came into office to resist denominational ascendancy, and then passed a measure which gives to the schools of the Church of England about 73 per cent. of the total sum provided by the state for the primary instruction of children.¹

No one in 1870 was so blind to the difficulties of the problem, or so bent on symmetry at the expense of waste, as to expect the government to introduce a scheme that would thrust aside what had already been achieved for primary instruction under the voluntary and denominational system—a system called

¹ The Education Grant for the year ending 31st March, 1871, was distributed thus:—

	£	s.	d.
Church of England	513,302	8	1
Roman Catholic	44,533	14	5
Wesleyan	45,552	10	4
British	100,064	11	2

£703,453 4 0.

voluntary, although, let us remark in passing, it had received some £10,000,000 sterling from parliamentary grants between 1839 and 1868.¹ But no one among Liberals suspected, nor did any one among Conservatives hope, that a deliberate invitation would be given to this system to extend and consolidate itself. Yet the half year of grace in itself constituted an invitation of this kind, of which the persons concerned availed themselves with prudent expedition, hardly believing in their own good fortune.²

But a still more decisive step than even this was taken, not only for the extension but for the perpetuation of the old system. The annual grants were increased, to the amazement and delight of the Conservatives, who had never wished for so unnecessary a concession. The increase of annual grants under the New Revised Code was an expedient as fatal to secular instruction of an advanced kind, as it was encouraging to the views of sectarian managers. On the one hand it lessened the cost of maintaining schools, so that a large and fairly managed school may be

¹ Of this £10,000,000 about six and a half millions have been paid to the church schools; add to this the church share of the cost of central administration, and the total of the church share of the ten millions will be seven.

² The Building Grants, during the six months' grace, were, in 1871:—3,330 applications. Of these, 2,282 applications had been approved by the 14th June, 1872. It was estimated by Mr. Forster that the Building Grants would amount to £400,000.

Of the 3,330 applications there were—

Church of England	2,885
Roman Catholics	82
Other denominations	128
British and unsectarian	235

The total number of applications previously was only 150 per annum.

quite or nearly self-supporting; a Church manager may thus retain the control of one of these "nurseries of church principles," without any sacrifice being required from the subscribers. On the other hand, the extreme grant (half the total income), may be obtained with only a moderate exertion, and teachers have no inducement to increase the efficiency of the school beyond a very low standard.

III.

Before going further, let us briefly examine the nature of the policy of making the clergy the administrators of the fund devoted by the state to purposes of primary instruction. Why do we object to this policy? Why do we assert that the maintenance of this system of leaving elementary education in the hands of priests is a fatal blow to our best hopes of a higher national life? This is a question which should be answered in the largest way. It involves at bottom our conception of some of the deepest problems which are destined to try the strength of societies for perhaps two centuries to come. Before touching this fundamental part of the controversy, let us remark one or two more obvious, but still very important, sides of it.

To begin with, the instruction which is given in the denominational schools has been almost worthless, and if it does not continue to be so, the reason of the change will be the competition of the unsectarian schools. We hear a great deal of the wonders that

have been wrought for education in England by the system of which the clergy have been the chief promoters. It is worth while to bear in mind the exact extent of the sacrifices made by the Church. The subscriptions to Church of England schools, according to the last published report of the Privy Council (1871-2), amounted to £343,084 13s. 4d. Whether that is any very prodigious sum, we shall presently consider. It would be ungenerous to speak of the efforts and sacrifices made by the clergy on behalf of their schools in a too critical spirit, if such efforts and sacrifices in the past did not happen to be made the ground of utterly disproportionate claims to educational control in the future. Nothing would be more ignoble than any attempt to disparage the services of the clergy in the spread of instruction. Still it is rather hard that the fact of the clergy having done a little in the past, should prevent the nation from doing a great deal in the future. When we hear the denominational system extolled as a magnificent and unparalleled monument of Christian charity and Christian energy, and when it is made to stand in the way of public policy, it would be a feeble postponement of justice to generosity, if we did not ask what after all is the outcome and upshot of this magnificent and unparalleled monument. It is this. "Of four-fifths of the scholars about to leave school, either no account or an unsatisfactory one, is given by an examination of the most strictly elementary kind."

This was under the old system. Let us pass to the new. What is that state of things which any one who knows the value of instruction finds so deplorable, and any one who knows the value of public money finds so wasteful? The last blue-book may tell us, and in a very few words. This is the key sentence to the right reading of the whole system:—"Considering the large number of children who leave school for work at ten years of age, it is not satisfactory to find that of the scholars above that age who were examined, as many as 46,916 were presented in Standard I., 74,654 in Standard II., and 81,602 in Standard III." (P. xii.) I subjoin in a foot-note the qualifications required by the New Code, so that the reader may see for himself what ability to pass in the Third Standard amounts to.¹ Consider then, first,

	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.
(1) READING.	Short paragraph from book used in school, not confined to words of one syllable.	Short paragraph from elementary reading book.	Short paragraph from more advanced reading book.	Few lines of poetry selected by inspector.	Short ordinary paragraph in a newspaper or other modern narrative.	To read with fluency and expression.
WRITING.	Copy in manuscript character a line of print, and write from dictation a few common words.	Sentence from same book slowly read once, and then dictated in single words.	Sentence slowly dictated once by a few words at a time, from the same book.	Sentence slowly dictated once by a few words at a time, from a reading book.	Short paragraph in newspaper or 10 lines of verse slowly dictated once by a few words at a time.	Short theme or letter, or easy phrases.
ALITHMETIC.	Simple addition and subtraction of numbers, of not more than 4 figures, and the multiplication table to 6 times 12.	Subtraction, multiplication, and short division.	Long division and compound rules (money).	Compound rules (commonweights and measures).	Practice and bills of parcels.	Proportion and fractions (vulgar and decimal).

that only 27.14 per cent. of the whole number of children in the schools are over ten years old, and 1.32 per cent. over fourteen years old; second, that a large proportion of the children go out of the schools at ten, and learn no more as long as they live; third, that of all the children over ten who were examined in the year ending Aug. 31, 1872 (namely, 318,934), only 122,704 passed in all the subjects of even the three lower standards. Now make as many allowances as you will for those who were absent from the inspection for other reasons than non-qualification; for those who were qualified by attainments but not by attendances; for those who were for economic reasons presented in a lower standard than their attainments would have justified; for those who passed in two out of the three subjects and only failed in one: the broad result is still this,—that the mass of the children leaving school at ten or eleven, do so without any real, effective, or lasting facility in the use of the simplest intellectual instruments.

Figures and standards convey only one part of the evil. Another question remains, to which the answer is still more unsatisfactory. Even when a child can pass the new Third Standard, what does that mean? “As regards the actual amount of education which is got in our schools,” writes one inspector, “by the children who are examined in the provisions of the New Code, I believe that a considerable number learn to write a fairly legible hand; but that *few learn to read without effort such books as children of their age*

ought to read with perfect ease. For example, I have heard every child in the first class of a school read without difficulty a paragraph of the book which the class was being trained to use, and every one of them break down signally even over the simple words of a sentence in a book of a similar stamp which had not been seen before.”¹ Such children, therefore, might pass in their standard and yet their passing would be no guarantee that they could read ten lines away from the book with which they had been crammed.

“At present,” writes another inspector, “vast sums of public money are granted on the examination of children, who by reason of the disproportion between their age and attainments, offer little or no promise that their so-called education will be of any lasting benefit either to themselves or the State.” That is to say, “vast sums of public money” are simply wasted.

Speaking of the half-timers, the same inspector gives this account:—“At ten or twelve years of age the unhappy children make their first appearance at school, knowing nothing, and practised in all manner of bad habits. The teachers do what they can; force them perhaps through one or two standards; then arriving at thirteen these ripe scholars pass full time, leave school, and their education is over. That this is no exaggeration is evident from comparison of the numbers presented in any factory school in Standards I. and II. with those in the upper standards, and from observation of the age of the children in lower stan-

¹ Mr. Stewart's Report, p. 150.

dards. I give for illustration the only school I have examined during the week in which I write. In it 48 children were examined in Standards I. and II., and 14 in III., IV., V., and VI. Throughout the whole of Preston, which has an average attendance of more than 11,000, I do not think that 100 children have been *presented* this year in the 6th Standard. Yet it is obvious that *unless a child can show an amount of knowledge something like the higher standards of the Code, he holds out very meagre promise that any permanent effect will follow from his school career.*"¹

Nearly every other inspector tells the same story of the ultimate worthlessness of those results for which we are paying so disproportionately. One of them even says this:—"I don't wonder that even the most intelligent parents take away their children from the elementary school after ten or eleven years of age; perhaps it is their very intelligence that makes them do so. Where there is little or perhaps nothing taught save reading, writing, and arithmetic, the school is in truth merely an infant school grown to undue and monstrous proportions."² "A really good reading-lesson I do not often hear," says one.³ "I cannot conceal from myself," says another, "that the general instruction under the New Code is meagre and formal. . . . I see this strongly in the reading exercise, where children of the higher standards who read fluently and with accuracy are often unable to

¹ Mr. Steele's Report, pp. 145-6.

² Mr. Kennedy's Report, p. 102.

³ Mr. Syng's Report, p. 177.

answer fair and simple questions, either as to the meaning of the words used, or to the subject-matter of the lesson. I have always been of opinion that a child who cannot answer such questions ought not to be allowed to 'pass' in the exercise. For the reading is really no reading to him; it is only an exercise in sound and not in sense; it gives him no information."¹ This, let us observe, is an account of the higher and best children. "Teaching, in its highest sense," writes a third, "is almost extinct, and teachers seem inclined to think that their responsibility is now limited to training children to 'pass' the examinations prescribed in the New Code."²

All this is the natural consequence of entrusting public money to persons whose chief interest in the matter is something quite apart from the purpose for which that money is entrusted to them. We are thinking of the nation, of giving a chance to the poor, of improving those intellectual resources on which as a people of skilled trades we depend for so much of our prosperity. The little knots of managers on whom we so irrationally devolve the duty are not thinking of this, but either of their sect and its dogmas and shibboleths, or else of nothing at all. Mark then how little fruit we get for all our labour and money.

To pass in Standard VI. a child must be able to read with fluency and expression, to write a short letter, and to work rule-of-three sums and fractions.

¹ Mr. Watkins, p. 217.

² Mr. Stewart, p. 155.

These are no immoderate acquirements. Yet in this standard only 15,031 children were presented, and of these 1,236 failed in reading, 3,755 failed in writing, and 6,212 in arithmetic. That is to say, of the two million children on the school registers, only 8,819 passed without failure in the three subjects of the sixth standard.

We should never allow ourselves to forget what Mr. Mundella told the House of Commons in 1870, that the English sixth standard (in the Revised Code, not the New Code), our highest, is below the lowest Saxon, Prussian, or Swiss standard even for country schools. "Arithmetic was taught in the schools in Germany to an extent far beyond that which was deemed necessary here. In Saxony, the pupils before leaving school, were not only called upon to read fluently, and write a good readable hand, but they were also required to write from memory in their own words a short story which had been previously read to them; and the children besides were instructed in geography, singing, and the history of the fatherland, as well as in religion. We had never yet passed 20,000 in a population of 20,000,000 to the sixth standard in one year; whereas old Prussia without her recent aggrandisement passed nearly 380,000 every year."¹

Let this be an answer to those who remind us that eligibility for examination in the new Standard VI. practically implies, (1) that the scholar is fourteen

¹ Speech in the House of Commons, March 18, 1870.

years old, (2) that he has never missed his examination during five preceding years. Many children, I am told, who could easily pass in Standard VI. have not fulfilled these conditions, and are therefore classed for examination in IV. or V. Say 10,000 children come into this category—probably 1,000 would be nearer the mark—what then?

This, therefore, is the first ground why we should not do anything to encourage or extend the denominational schools. Their secular instruction is bad. They do the work, for which they claim an eternal and substantial gratitude, so ill that the result hardly deserves any gratitude at all. Two-thirds of the children turned out by them come out in a condition of ignorance practically unbroken, and with a quantity of instruction so small as to be practically worthless. As was well said by Dr. Lyon Playfair, "What we call education in the inspected schools of England is the mere seed used in other countries, but with us that seed, as soon as it has sprouted, withers and dries up, and never grows up into a crop for the feeding of the nation."¹ Politicians who tell us that the one great object of their lives is to secure general compulsory education, seem never to think it of any importance whether the education is good or bad. They deafen you with the statistics of increased attendances, with the jargon of the register and the time table. To them instruction is instruction, and every hour at school is assumed to be fruitful. We hear how many

¹ Speech in the House of Commons, June 20, 1870.

thousands of schools are open, how many thousands of certificated teachers, assistant teachers, and pupil teachers are employed in them, how many thousands of pounds are required to defray the cost, how many thousands of children attend; and with that portentous numerical demonstration we are expected to be content. Yet a mere mouse comes forth from this labouring mountain. The children no doubt receive *a certain amount of drill in cleanliness, order, punctuality, obedience*; more than this, they are made in a silent and unconscious way alive to the presence of social interest and duty around them. They are not left in that half-wondering desolation, that forlorn abandonment, which stamps itself in the weird features of the gutter children of great cities. All this is true and it is important. But such drill is not enough, and no one seriously contends that it is enough. It is essential that the children of the workmen and of the poor should be admitted a little further within the gates of civilization than this. The denominational schools, as the figures of the results of the examinations prove, have taken no pains to admit them further.

It is hard to see why people insist so eagerly on compulsion, and declare that universal compulsion is the one thing for which they care, when the fare of which you are going to compel the children to partake is of this beggarly and innutritious quality. Hence the fallaciousness of Mr. Lowe's assertion that "we should endeavour to get to school the million and a

half of children who do not attend, rather than enter into competition with instruction already given." That is, we are to leave the quality as it is, and devote all our efforts to augmenting quantity. There can be no more gross illusion. Yet these denominational schools, with all their bad instruction against which we are warned not to compete, are the only schools accessible, and according to the present law, the only schools that ever will be accessible, to one half or more of our population. The gentleman's son at nine is barely supposed to have begun his education, yet this child at nine possesses an amount of knowledge that represents more than the whole educational stock in trade which is thought sufficient for four-fifths of the children of the workmen.

Contrast this wretched, illusory, starved outcome of your magnificent monument of Christian energy,—Christian energy, mark, that has been substantially supplemented by building grants and capitation grants from the purse of the state—with the state of things in Scotland. "Every peasant in Scotland knows that it is his own fault if he does not acquire such knowledge in his own school as will enable him to aspire to the university. Out of 3,500 students at the Scotch universities, about 500 are the sons of wage-making artisans or peasants."¹ The common schools of the United States are probably not so good as those of Scotland. Yet a professor at a university in one of the great towns of the West lately told the present

¹ Dr. Lyon Playfair's Speech, June 20, 1870.

writer that among the lads in his university classes are some who rise at four or five in the morning to make their day's bread by distributing the morning papers; others who light the lamps in the streets; while one of the best students this year is a youth who goes down to the town every afternoon to earn a dinner by shaving at a barber's. In answer to a question where these strenuous pupils had previously been able to pick up instruction enough to enable them to profit by professors' lectures, my informant said it was the fault of any boy who had been to a common school if he had not picked up instruction enough for this. Of how many of the schools accessible to the corresponding class in England will their most admiring champions contend that this is true?

Mr. Forster has always, to his honour, expressed a peculiar anxiety that there should be as many ways opened as possible by which boys from the working class, who had shown special capacity and promise, should have a chance of higher secondary instruction. No other politician has spoken with such fervour of this most desirable consummation. Not all the politicians together could have done more than he has done to make it impossible. The instruction in the bulk of the denominational schools which he is bent on preserving and feeding, is so wretched that the children who can get no other are wholly debarred from ever being fit to profit by the higher instruction.

The children are being got into the schools, but what of that? Who that has had to do with the

evening classes of a Mechanics' Institute 'does not recognise the deplorable truth of this picture which is given us of one of them, in a district where the provision of elementary instruction is counted unusually satisfactory :—" Apprentices come expecting to take up the sciences. Young joiners, masons, mechanics, and representatives of other trades come, knowing that a knowledge of building construction, practical and theoretical mechanics, and other subjects treating of the strength of materials, the erection of buildings, and the making of machinery, would be of great advantage to them. They find to their bitter disappointment, when they really have to face their work, that they have come to learn mathematics, knowing next to nothing of arithmetic ; that their spelling is so bad that some of them cannot write out the problems dictated to them by the master. Throughout all the sciences, from chemistry downwards, and to a great extent in the case of drawing also—which has been pronounced 'the mainspring of a technical education,'—the same difficulty of want of foundation and groundwork is experienced." Thus the attendant at the night class after a day of hard labour has to vex himself with the harassing and cheerless drudgery of multiplication and division, of writing and spelling, instead of being fitted by an efficient discipline in his earlier youth to come direct to the higher work, whose practical interest would at once improve, refresh, and animate him.

It is no wonder that of the young men who come to

learn the special knowledge connected with a certain trade, and then find that they know nothing of the simple rudiments of the subject, while "some go back manfully to the three R's, not a few give up the whole thing in despair, and leave the classes altogether. It is precisely the same in elementary classes. Young men and women flock to the Institute when these classes commence. Scores of them can scarcely read, some can neither write nor cypher, and after a few weeks the difficulty of learning, shame of their ignorance, and temptations of one sort or another take a large percentage away." No doubt a percentage would fall away in any case, but it is too lamentable that public indifference nursing a public delusion should leave us contented with a system whose results are so disastrously useless and inefficient as this kind of story proves them to be.

Certainly no child below the sixth standard could do any real good in a secondary school. It is clear then that the present system and standards of primary instruction exclude all but a very small minority from so much as the bare chance of partaking of those vast means of educational endowment which lie open to the sons of the middle and upper classes. It will not do to say that the children of the poor have neither capacity nor industry nor time enough to come up to Standard VI. Nobody in his senses will believe that there is any disqualification about English poverty so fatal as this. It is not fatal in Scotland. It is not fatal in the United States. It is not fatal in Germany.

It would not be so in England, if the instruction of the young were recognised as one of the highest of national duties, instead of being a superfluity left to the sects, and if the superintendence of the discharge of this duty were rescued from the control of clerical managers.

The denominational schools can never make the provision of good secular instruction their main object, for the excellent reason that the provision of good secular instruction is a secondary object with those who work them. These persons meant, and still mean, sectarian instruction to be the first thing, and secular instruction the second, and second it has been and will be. Here is a recent advertisement from the *Church Times*:—"WANTED, at once, £50 to rescue 200 souls from Dissent. Of your charity help!" On further inquiry we learn that this means that it is proposed to establish a church school in order to supplant a dissenting school in a district at Swindon. Yet the people who give this fifty pounds for the purpose of rescuing two hundred souls from dissent will in due time be extolled and cherished by Mr. Forster as persons who have made a sacrifice for education. "In the present condition of church schools," we are told by the National Society, "it is more than ever necessary that they should be made the nurseries of church principles. . . . This last [that the children may grow up to be not churchmen only but communicants] is the object at which we ought uniformly to aim—the training of the young Christian for full

communion with the Church; and as a preliminary to that a training for confirmation. *The whole school time of a child should lead up to this.*"¹

Of course therefore secular instruction goes to the wall, and the greater the zeal of the churchman, the more surely will this be the case. We have no right to blame the sectarian managers for that. But we have a right to ask for the discontinuance, on the very swiftest terms compatible with practical expediency, of a system which has shown itself so deplorable a failure. Instead of that, the grants were increased—a step neither more nor less than fatal to educational progress. Those who were anxious that the quality as well as the quantity of education should be attended to, urged Mr. Forster to reduce the grants in the lower standards, even if he increased them proportionately in the higher. This most wise suggestion was rejected in the same spirit as most other suggestions likely to be disagreeable to the partisans of sectarian teaching.

Many clerical managers frankly confess that the withdrawal of religious knowledge from the subjects of the inspector's examination has quenched their interest in the whole process. They thoroughly distrust secular instruction. Their organs abound in the well-known nonsense as to its dangers, and solemnly warn us that writing and arithmetic do not make loyal citizens or virtuous men, that there is no moral power in grammar, that geography does

¹ *Monthly Paper* for August, 1872.

not implant generous aspirations, nor does spelling lead us to flee from iniquity. People who had only learnt to read and write, to spell and do sums, "would probably proceed in some such way as many did in Paris; when they felt overawed by the superior power of authority, the people, trained under a system of secular education (*sic*), petitioned for the state to find them whatever capital was needed to convert artisans into manufacturers. When defeat had crushed the power of the state, they inaugurated the rule of the Commune, and by violence appropriated the property of the wealthy, and destroyed whatever could remind them of men in superior position."¹ This marvellous amalgam of wilful falsehood in fact with unconscious folly in inference comes from the official organ of that very important body, the National Society, and it is a fair account of the point of view from which most of the clerical managers in their hearts regard that secular instruction which the nation has to so large an extent placed in their hands.

IV.

The secular instruction in these schools is bad for another reason, besides the comparatively small value—beyond the attainment of the grant—set by the managers on secular knowledge. The teachers are bad. The most important of all the persons concerned in perfecting what ought to be treated as the most fundamental of national duties, have no ani-

¹ National Society's *Monthly Paper*, May, 1873.

mating conception of this duty, and no attainments proper for its efficient discharge. This is the inevitable result of the denominational system, for it is that system which stunts the training of the schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, limits their knowledge to scanty and unfruitful elements, and checks that independence and high self-respect which is one of the first conditions of influence over the young. "In Scotland," says Dr. Lyon Playfair, "the teachers of our elementary schools are University-bred men, and they bridge over the chasm between the lower and upper schools by their learning and zeal. It is wholly to this connection that we owe the position which Scotch artisans and the middle-class take in occupations where intelligence is a condition for success." Contrast men of such a training and such a temper with the corresponding class in England. Where are these men to find learning? Most of them come from the denominational training schools. And what is the notion of learning in them? Something most disastrously different from that of a Scotch university. Here are some specimens from recent reports made by the government inspectors:—

Battersea.—"The students of the second year [the last year of the course] fell below a fair standard of proficiency in grammar and mental arithmetic. They did very well in Holy Scripture, arithmetic, school management, and political economy."

Chelsea.—"The students of the second year passed with credit in Holy Scripture, arithmetic, English composition, and school management. They did not reach a fair standard in mental arithmetic, English grammar, geography, and Euclid. Their penmanship, also, was of very low quality."

Cheltenham.—"The students of the second year passed with credit in Holy Scripture and school management. They did not acquit themselves creditably

in English grammar, Liturgy, mental arithmetic, English composition, and geography."

Culham.—"The students of the second year passed with credit in Holy Scripture. They were below a fair standard in mental arithmetic and English grammar."

Exeter.—"The students of the second year did not reach a fair standard in these subjects:—Mental arithmetic, English grammar, geography, history, Euclid."

Peterborough.—"The students of the second year did not reach a fair proficiency in mental arithmetic, English grammar, geography, history, or Euclid."

It is the same story throughout—narrow range of subjects, low standards, and lower proficiency. Why, there is scarcely one of these reports in which the inspector has not to complain that even the poor art of penmanship has not been properly mastered. We can hardly wonder that if these be the teachers, most of the learners leave their hands very nearly as ignorant as when they first went to school. You do not want Porsons or Newtons to teach rustics how to read, or handicraftsmen how to count. That is true. But the example of Scotland shows, as the common sense of any one who has thought about the art of education will tell him apart from the example of Scotland, that the work of primary instruction will never be well done by men and women who have themselves only gone a very little way beyond primary instruction. If the schoolmasters had, like the Scotch schoolmasters, acquired learning enough to know its value and significance, to feel a zealous interest in its diffusion, to think it one of the worthiest objects of human devotion to give the young a chance of entering into the treasures of human knowledge, we should not find four-fifths

of their pupils coming away from them practically unable to read. But in England the schoolmaster is not taught either to acquire or to value learning. That is not the desire of his employers. They plainly tell us so. "There is need now more than ever," says the organ of the National Society, "that our teachers should be more thoroughly fitted for the religious side of the work; they should not only be religious people, but sound church people. . . . Is it too much to hope that the Church will furnish from her earnest communicant members an abundant supply of really devout young people, who will give themselves earnestly to the work of school teaching, in the belief that there is no more effective way of benefitting their fellow creatures than by giving them a sound education in the theology of the Church of England?" There is no doubt an additional gusto in doing this, if your education happens to have been largely provided at the cost of fellow-creatures who repudiate the theology of the Church of England.

Of this we shall have something to say by-and-by. The present point is that bad secular instruction for the teachers is the natural result of the denominational system. "The tabulated results of the examination at Christmas last," runs the report of an inspector of Church of England Training Schools, "show continued weakness in the answers of the first-year students upon English history and geography. . . . No subject has been taught in our Training Schools

* The National Society's *Monthly Paper* for February, 1872.

up to the present time with greater care and attention than the Holy Scriptures and the Book of Common Prayer, and there is no subject in which the students have more universally improved." The consequence is that while a Scotchman and an American can tell us with pride that it is the peasant boy's own fault if he does not carry away knowledge enough from the parish school to fit him for a college course, an Englishman has the sorry tale to tell that four-fifths of the children leave our schools unable to read with comfort, to spell, to write, or to count to any practical purpose. And let us add one point more. The sacrifice of mere secular knowledge to knowledge of the Scriptures does not even procure its own end. A Scotch schoolmaster would not have much chance of holding his own if he were not a hundred times better instructed in the Bible than the average English schoolmaster. And he knows a great many other things besides, and knows them well, while the English schoolmaster generally knows very few other things besides, and knows them extremely ill.

The Inspector who now undertakes the religious examination of training colleges which the state abandoned in 1870, assures those who sympathise with him: "The key of our position is the Training College. While we have religious teachers, it is really of secondary importance under what regulations they carry on their work. Such as the teacher is, such will be the school"—a statement in which, by the way, we cordially agree, and it is not

borne in mind by those who think the Conscience Clause a perfect guarantee for unsectarian teaching in the hours of secular instruction. "The responsibility thrown upon Training Colleges can hardly be overrated," continues Canon Norris. . . : . . "The contrast between their papers as candidates in 1871, and these same young people's papers in 1872, proves most satisfactorily what an advance in religious thoughtfulness a single year in a Training College may effect." Of course, the teachers are perfecting themselves in religious thoughtfulness at the cost of arithmetical, grammatical, and geographical thoughtfulness.

Nor does the inferiority of the teacher arise merely from the wretched kind of intellectual cultivation he receives. His whole position under the denominational system is the most unfavourable that can be imagined to anything like manly vigour and self-respect. He is the mere creature of the clergyman, and he knows it, and so also do both the clergyman and the children in the school know it. Some brawl took place this year between a vicar and the master of his schools. In the course of it, the vicar presumed to write a public letter in which he says, with more truth and boldness than discretion:—"I, not he [the master], am vicar of Dudley; I, not he, am chairman of the managers; and I will not allow him to insult me openly *without letting him know that our relative positions are those of master and servant.*" There is perhaps rather more Christian energy than Christian

moderation here, but the vicar of Dudley has very fairly emphasised the situation. It is true that the state grant is won by the exertions of the teacher, and that the state contributes largely to the school in other ways. This does not in the least diminish the clerical manager's sense of proprietorship. The relation between him and his teacher does really figure itself, as their too candid representative says, as the relation of master to servant. How can we expect to find "learning and zeal" in a teacher, who is only an upper dependent of the rectory?

This is not a figure of speech. If any one will take the trouble to turn over the advertisements for schoolmasters and schoolmistresses he will get a useful glimpse into the working of the denominational system, and understand, first, why dissenters object to pay money for its support and extension, and, secondly, why the educational results are so lamentable. Sound churchmanship is one constant requirement, though the definition of sound churchmanship must be elastic. One teacher is required to be "Church, earnest, but moderate;" another "Church, sound and active." One must be free from rationalism and ritualism. Another must have "thorough evangelical principles." A third, wanted for some Protestant schools near the London Docks, must be "an earnest Catholic, and might live with the clergy if desired." To act as choirmaster, as organist, as parish clerk, "to train a surpliced choir in services mostly Gregorian in a beautiful church," "to attend

Sunday-school and take charge of the children at church, and to and from church," "to live in a parsonage, and take charge of and teach a little boy," to be a communicant—such are conditions prescribed again and again. In one case a "preference would be given to one who would do a little secretary's work, and give an hour's private instruction daily to a little boy of seven." In another, the teacher is "to act as clerk and *sexton*; harmonium, singing, and sewing required. House and £50, and two-thirds of government grant." Can you expect "learning and zeal" in the department of secular instruction from a class whose members are first and above all things required to fill minor church and domestic offices, down to superintending choir linen and digging the graves of the parish?

Let us here pause for a moment to meet an objection. We have been arguing that one of the reasons why the secular instruction of denominational schools is so inferior, lies in the fact that they are denominational schools. So, it will be said, are the Prussian schools. This is quite true. But mark two important points of difference. First, in Prussia the minister of the parish is personally charged with the religious instruction of the school. That is not added to the proper duties of the schoolmaster, nor, I believe, is the function of digging graves. The teacher is left to his own business. Secondly, in Prussia, denominationalism is not militant as it is here. There is the great chasm between Protestant and

Catholic, but you will not find, as in England, those violently opposed sects within the body of the state church, and outside of it sects enough to need a little dictionary for their enumeration, all animated by that spirit of "watchful jealousy" which Mr. Winterbotham used to admire so much before he joined the government. It is the angry feud between Evangelical, Sacramentalist, and Latitudinarian—between the state church and that dissent which an eminent prelate classed with overcrowded cottages and beer-shops, as one of the three great hindrances to the progress of morality—it is this active passion which gives to denominationalism in England a complexion and significance which belong to it in no other country. The denominational distinctions in Prussia do not represent a violent social combat, and the moment denominationalism was supposed to mean a combat of this kind in the case of the priests, we know what became of it. In England the sects are at open war, and the schools represent one of the most important battle-fields. "We want church teachers," says the organ of the strongest sect, "as the true protection of society against modern dissent, which does not believe enough, against Romanism which believes too much, and against infidelity that believes nothing at all." Again: "We have elevated the people to the franchise, and by their use of it they can now practically rule the course of legislation. Here then is the Church's opportunity. She has two-thirds of the voters of England under her direct teaching!

It will be her own fault if she do not imbue them with her principles, and secure their allegiance to her cause." "If the Church has made proper use of her schools, her grown-up children will know how to make a proper use of what they have learnt, and will manfully defend her."¹ We may be quite sure that if the German schools became inspired by designs so alien as this from a loyal and hearty devotion to the chief cause for which they exist, they too would soon have to lower their standards of secular attainment until they reached our own miserable level.

Let us not omit one more reason of the inefficiency of the denominational schools—their want of funds. Previously to the recent agitation the clergy who now boast of the extraordinary sacrifices of their party, were loud in their complaints of the meanness of wealthy churchmen, and the straits to which they were put, especially in country districts. Hence a low class of teachers and inefficient educational appliances. Now no augmentation in the subscriptions from private sources is to be expected, and every attempt will be, and is being, made to keep the cost down to the level of the barest necessity—just sufficient to earn the full grant from the state.

V.

By the consolidation and extension of the policy of leaving the clergy to administer the educational funds

¹ National Society's *Monthly Paper* for June (p. 122), and for July (p. 145).

of the country, we threw away one of the rarest and most convenient opportunities, first of inculcating and diffusing a new sense of the value of instruction, and of national responsibility in undertaking its provision and control; secondly, of deepening those habits of local self-government which, as the contemporary history of other countries is every day proving to us, are at the very root of our superior political advancement. And we threw away this opportunity especially in the rural districts, where it was most desirable to seize it and make the most of it. It is a passing fashion at present to disparage self-government, as cumbrous, tardy, unscientific, and inefficient. People are ready to laugh at the vulgarity, the personalities, the tediousness of vestries, town-councils, and boards; and undoubtedly there is only too much room for improvement in all these respects. Yet on the whole, when the vulgarity and personality has filled its share of the time spent in discussion, it is the opinion of those who have had most experience of these bodies that they usually come to the right practical conclusion. They do what their most competent advisers would have wished them to do. They occasionally bungle, and they occasionally job, but all this amounts to an extremely small fraction by the side of the bungling, the jobbery, and the wasteful outlay, of the most minutely centralized systems. From the Byzantine empire down to the last Napoleonic empire, all history tells the same story in this respect.

The services of local self-government in preserving good political habits in those who take part in it are too familiar a theme among English publicists to need further commemoration. Now all the objections in the mouths of the clergy and others against establishing School-boards in country parishes are simply objections to self-government, and a denial of *its services exactly in those conditions where they are most needed*. It is precisely in the rural districts that the consciousness of national life is feeblest, the sense of public responsibility most confused, the habits of collective action for public objects least formed and least on the alert. It is precisely in these districts that our present educational policy takes an important department of the local affairs out of the hands of all but the clergy (for as a rule the lay managers are dummies), and so there is a double loss. Not only does the administration of an enterprise largely conducted by means of government grants lose the wholesome supervision of a miscellaneous body of laymen. The laymen themselves lose one of the very few fields of public co-operation open to them. With that they lose the chance of improving in all the habits which such public co-operation implies, and they fail to acquire what it is so vastly important that they should acquire, the sense that the school represents a national duty and not a clerical hobby. We do not expect any transcendental enthusiasm from small farmers and country shopkeepers, but there is among them, as among other

people, a certain amount, if not a very large amount, of the capacity of public spirit. To make them take a part in controlling the school would be doing all that is possible, whether that all be much or little, towards evoking and stimulating this public spirit in that very department where its absence is most mischievous. It may be urged that rural School-boards would never avail themselves of the permission to make compulsory bye-laws. Even then the rural districts would be in this respect no worse off than they are now. But of course no statesmanlike settlement of the question will leave so important a general principle as compulsion to be applied at the will of the Boards.

Though tenderness for denominational schools did not lead the government away from our admirable tradition of local administration in the towns, yet even in them this tenderness has had most evil effects. The effect of the Act has been first, as every one knows, that the election of members of the Boards is the cause of the most bitter kind of sectarian struggle on every occasion. Secondly, in consequence of the action of the cumulative vote, the Boards are often filled with eager sectarian representatives, who attend to push or guard the interests of this or that religious faction, rather than to co-operate in the largest and most free spirit in one of the greatest of public works. Hence, while in the country districts the opportunity of stirring lay interest and securing active lay participation has been thrown away, in the towns it has been used, but used in the worst manner possible.

A final point deserves notice. One of the prime advantages which local self-government is believed to confer upon us lies in its guarantees for thrifty administration. The ratepayers themselves elect the men to whom the expenditure of rates is entrusted; the discussion as to the disposal of funds raised by rates is more or less public; the accounts of outlay are accessible to any ratepayer who cares to know how his money is going. None of these conditions is complied with under the Act of 1870, or the Amendment Act of 1873. School-boards and boards of guardians are empowered to pay the fees of children of indigent parents in denominational schools, and a steadily increasing sum will be paid in this way. Now, what does this come to? Why that, for the first time in our history, a sum of money raised by rates is to be handed over to irresponsible bodies, over whom the ratepayers have not the smallest control, who may spend the money so procured as extravagantly and with as little effective return as they like, whose proceedings are private, and who often publish no statement of accounts. A more flagrant violation of an organic principle of our constitution has never been committed.

VI.

. An eminent leader of the agitation against the Act of 1870, a Christian minister of unimpeachable orthodoxy according to the Independent standard, which is no lax one, has been pronounced extravagant for comparing our battle against clerical control of the

national schools with Prince Bismarck's battle against Ultramontanes and Jesuits. Yet the comparison is perfectly sound. Of course he did not mean that the English clergy are Jesuits, but that the expediency of entrusting the clergy and the Catholic priests with the control of national instruction turns upon the same set of general considerations with reference to progress, enlightenment, and the common weal, as those which determine the expediency of allowing Jesuits and others to corrupt public spirit and weaken national life in Germany. This is really a true account of the matter, and it brings us to the root of the present dispute.

We have seen that the secular instruction furnished in the denominational schools is thoroughly bad and inefficient, when tested either by the educational achievements of other countries, or by the practical requirements of life. This is so, first, because the teachers are bad; secondly, because the managers are only moderately desirous that either teachers or teaching should be really good; thirdly, because the voluntary part of the funds is not adequate; fourthly, because the schools are constantly found to be too small to support an efficient system. These hostile conditions, especially the two first, we have seen to be bound up with the continued association between the schoolhouse and the parsonage. We have seen, moreover, that so long as parliament neglects to compel the formation of School-boards in rural parishes, we are losing the only means of breaking this most

narrowing and crippling association, and we are at the same time losing one of the very few means open to us of stirring public activity and public spirit in the parts of the country where these virtues are naturally rarest. Our present educational policy means a continuance of bad instruction on the one hand, and an extension of ecclesiastical and sectarian influences on the other. Instead of an energetic effort to raise the quality of instruction, we are content with multiplying the recipients of an education that is in the vast majority of cases barely worth receiving. Instead of giving to the schools the mark of an independent province of the national government, we leave them in the dark, close, depressing, hollows of sectarianism. Instead of consistently adhering to the progressive principle of religious equality, we have gone back several steps to give new life to the principle of Anglican supremacy. In short, as if the state church were too poor or too weak before, we have provided it with new revenues, armed it with fresh instruments of social influence, and finally confirmed it in the possession of an authority and an office which it has proved itself wholly incapable of discharging efficiently in the past, and which its leaders and spokesmen now openly declare their intention of using for their own sinister purposes in the future.

These are no mere phrases. I have already quoted passages from the organ of the National Society and other sources, in which the deliberate intention of

indirectly making the schools active sectarian agencies is avowed openly and without shame. More than this, we may test the disinterestedness of that educational zeal for which the clergy have taken such grossly excessive credit to themselves, by a single fact—their energetic opposition to the formation of School-boards. I never met a country clergyman who did not acknowledge the necessity of compulsion, direct or indirect, as the only means of rescuing the children from the eagerness of parents for their earnings, and the eagerness of the farmers for their labour. Some were for direct parliamentary compulsion, others for enforced labour certificates with progressive standards according to age, and penalties on the employer in case of breach. In either case, compulsion was uniformly admitted to be indispensable, the first essential of improved instruction. A law is passed, conferring this power of compulsion for which the clergy professed to be hungering and thirsting. And what happens? Why, the clergy instantly unite with one consent and with all their might to withstand the introduction of the machinery appointed by law for the introduction of compulsion, simply because that machinery would involve lay participation in school management, and the disuse of denominational formularies, though not the abandonment of denominational teaching. In other words, they are on their own showing wilfully sacrificing the instruction of the young to their own jealousy of lay co-operation, and their resolution not

to part with the Church Catechism. In some cases, they even condescend to the device of frightening their parishioners by strange statements of the cost of board schools, into paying a so-called voluntary rate that amounts to exactly the same sum as a legitimately levied rate. They thus relieve themselves and the previous subscribers, and make the parish pay for the school, while they keep from the parish any share in the control of the school which it pays for, and reject that power of obtaining compulsory attendance which before the Act they habitually pronounced to be the one change which is more indispensable and important than all others put together. With such an exhibition as this before our eyes, it is no breach of charity to regard the clerical professions of disinterested zeal for the instruction of the rural poor as too often a mere piece of self-deception in some, and of pure hypocrisy in others.

Nor again is the term of re-endowment a mere phrase. The church schools do, as a matter of fact, receive half a million a year from the public taxes, and this sum is likely very rapidly to rise to three quarters of a million, besides what they receive from rates, what they have received from building grants, and what is paid to the church training schools.¹ This glaring fact of sectarian endowment is met by the

¹ The grant for year ending August 31, 1872, £561,655 11s. 1d. The Church of England schools, before the Act, had received about a million and a quarter for buildings. The Church of England Training Schools receive some £60,000 a year from Government, as against slightly more than half that sum given to the training schools of all the other denominations together.

assertion that such payments are only made for the secular part of the teaching, and do not therefore constitute an appropriation for sectarian purposes. Such an assertion is a mere verbal proposition, without the slightest correspondence to the real conditions of the case. In the first place, large and well-managed schools may be, and actually are, paid for by fees and grants; the parents and the government pay for the whole outlay, and that voluntary aid which is theoretically supposed to provide the sectarian instruction, neither does nor is required to do any such thing.

I extract the following instances of what are meant by voluntary schools, from a parliamentary return of income and expenditure for Manchester and Salford, for 1870 and 1871, now before me:—

St. Saviour's, Chorlton, total income in 1870, £610, to which the voluntary contribution was £16.

Ancoats (Presbyterian), in 1871, total income, £717, to which the voluntary contribution was £66.

St. Barnabas, £356, of which the voluntary contribution was £5.

St. Jude's, total, £330; voluntary, £35.

St. Philip's, total, £505; voluntary, £45.

St. Wilfrid's (Catholic), total income, £891; voluntary part of it, £56 (not much more than the amount paid by the Board under the Twenty Fifth Clause).

St. George's, Hulme, in 1870, total, £458, of which the voluntary portion was exactly *one pound*; in 1871, total £483, voluntary £11.

Thus a school may be pointed to as a triumph of

the voluntary system when one four-hundred-and-fifty-eighth part of its income is derived from subscriptions! People ordinarily suppose that there is some obligatory proportion between voluntary subscriptions and government grants, as there used to be in respect of building grants. The minister has been vainly pressed to establish some such proportion. In the Debates of 1870, it was pointed out very clearly that "if denominational schools could be carried on by government grants and school pence, the principle laid down by the Prime Minister would be completely broken through—the principle, namely, that the government did not pay for the religious teaching of children in denominational schools. The government, therefore, should require that a certain proportion of the money for these schools should be raised by means of voluntary contributions. The amount might be fixed at one-sixth of the total expense, or at an amount equal to one-third of the grant."¹ No such amount has been fixed, and there is nothing to hinder a denominational school from subsisting wholly on the pence and the grants. The operation of the Twenty Fifth Clause, especially if the clause were applied as it would be but for the incessant vigilance of secularists and nonconformists, would obviously tend to make this proceeding still easier and more common.

In the second place, it is a palpable fallacy to say that the state aid does nothing for the sectarian part of the instruction. A payment without which an

¹ Mr. Hibbert in the House of Commons, June 23, 1870.

institution could not subsist, though it may be nominally made for special purposes, is and must be a payment for the institution as a whole. If I subscribe to a trade union, that subscription supports the strike fund no less than the benefit fund, however decisive may be the limitation of my intention to one of them. If a rich man subscribes to a newspaper that advocates the politics which he approves, while it also advocates the theology which he disapproves, though it may for this or that reason be worth his while to overlook the points of disagreement, yet he would certainly never pretend that he was not in fact helping to pay for the theological, as well as the political advocacy.

It is not merely that the state chooses to buy certain wares, of which it is in need, from a number of people who happen to keep in their shops a stock of wares of another kind as well as these. The state is something very different from a mere customer, unless we extend the idea of a customer so as to make it describe the person who has found the larger part of the capital, and assists in the organization of the business, and virtually confers a partial monopoly on the dealer. The state may disclaim all concern in the sectarian teaching, but as the school in which it is given could only be kept open on condition of state aid, it is the shallowest quibble to say that this state aid does not go to the maintenance of the sectarian teaching which would not be so given without it. We are told, for instance, that no subject has been taught in the training schools with greater care than

the Book of Common Prayer, nor any subject in which the students have made so much improvement. Next let us remember that these schools receive from the State about six times as much per annum as they receive from voluntary sources.¹ Is it not childish to ask us to believe that not a penny of these six-sevenths of the expenditure helps to pay for that part of the instruction for which the managers are most careful, and in which the students have most improved?

No sensible man will be imposed on for a moment by an artificial division of the purposes of the grants. In subsidising the denominational system you are subsidising all the incidents of the system. Every grant to a sectarian school is a direct grant to the sect. These payments constitute a policy of concurrent endowment in thin disguise. And they are made on the evil principle that to him that hath shall be given; the sect which is the strongest is made yet stronger. It has been constantly said that as the other sects may all establish schools equally entitled to state aid with those of the state church, the latter has no advantage and the former have no grievance. This is to forget that those who are not members of

¹ In the year 1870 for instance, the voluntary subscriptions to the Church of England training schools were £10,664 9s. 2d., and the Government grants to the same schools, £59,016 5s. 2d. From the same Report, the following important fact is also to be drawn. There are three British or unsectarian training schools, and forty-two undenominational schools. Of the students from the three undenominational schools, 30 per cent. passed in the first division. Of the students from the forty-two denominational schools, 17 per cent. passed in the first division. Even making all allowance for the circumstance, so unlucky for the credit of human nature, that with every increase of the area we must expect an increase in the ratio of blockheads, this is still a striking comment on the relative efficiency of the two systems.

the state church and belong to the less wealthy classes of the community have to pay for their own places of worship, and their own ministers. Churchmen have not had to provide their own religious service and ministration. Besides this they are by far the richest of the sects. It is not wonderful, then, that they should have built more schools and done more than the other sects for the cause of sectarian education, little as all that they have done really comes to.

Mr. Dale has put the state of the case very clearly:—"The Church of England, notwithstanding its internal divisions, has a very compact organization. All the churchmen in a parish can unite without difficulty to erect a school and to contribute to its maintenance. The school buildings can be used for church purposes—for Sunday-schools, for evening Bible-classes, for mothers' meetings, and for all the religious organizations which the church sustains. The Non-conformists in the parish may be more numerous than the churchmen, and may be equally zealous for education. But the Wesleyans may not be strong enough to support a Wesleyan school, nor the Congregationalists to support a Congregational school, nor the Unitarians to support a Unitarian school. If they suppress their religious differences and agree to establish a school in which there shall be no religious teaching to which Wesleyans, Congregationalists, or Unitarians can object, the obvious result is that the buildings cannot be used by any of them for religious purposes, and that while, from the conditions under

which the state makes its grants for educational purposes, the Church of England has a school in which Church of England doctrine is taught, the various Nonconformist churches are precluded, even if they desire it, from teaching their own faith in the school which they assist to maintain. Except in large towns, where individual congregations are large and wealthy, and can maintain schools of their own, all that the Nonconformist churches can do is to secure a school with no theological colour at all, while all over the country the Church of England can have schools in which its catechisms and formularies are taught with all the fulness that its most zealous adherents can desire."

Yet because it is the richest sect and is already an endowed church, this is the body which is to receive a further endowment of seventy-three per cent. out of the annual grant for elementary education. "If it be said," Mr. Gladstone urged, "that there is a recognition of the church in the liberal terms we propose for the voluntary schools, such an assertion would only mean that the palm is given to those who win."¹ A poorer sophism was never coined even in that busy mint of logical counterfeits. The palm given to those who win! As if, when the barrier was dropped, the competitors started fair; as if the one had not had every advantage which the public wealth could confer and private wealth utilize and augment, while the other was gleaning for bare subsistence among the

¹ Speech in the House of Commons, June 24, 1870.

*lean fields of voluntarism. The church had gone through a long course of diligent preliminary training in the race for public money, while Dissent had stood with austere self-respect aloof from what she deemed an ignoble chase. Why, the dissenters have in an immense proportion of the parishes in England been forcibly prevented by the landowners from so much as acquiring a bit of land on which to rear chapel or school, and on more than one great estate there has been a sort of private Conventicle Act positively forbidding, under penalty of ejection, so much as a prayer-meeting in a cottage kitchen. A strange handicap, indeed, in which you clap the heaviest weight on to the youngest competitor, and give the longest start to the stoutest and strongest, and then magnanimously hail the winner with an unctuous cry of *The palm to him who wins!**

This is not the place for a general discussion of the policy of religious endowment, concurrent or otherwise. The difference between concurrent and single endowment is not important, because after all the funds of the Anglican Church are really devoted to concurrent endowment. The Anglican body, for all its sacerdotal pretensions, is only a loose bundle of discordant sects, who are constituted into one Catholic and Apostolic Church by the Erastian bonds of an act of parliament. We shall only make two remarks. One is that this was not the policy which the Liberal voters intended to support in 1868. The other is that if we are to have the sects endowed with public

money; that policy ought to be carried out directly, and not by impeding so momentous a national function as the provision of instruction for the people. And the present system does impede this function. It hands over the difficult and important task of controlling secular instruction to persons who are thinking not of knowledge, but of "bulwarks of the Church," "nurseries of Church principles," institutions for "rescuing souls from Dissent," and the other sinister uses to which men put the schools that are called national, when they are in truth sectarian, and voluntary, when they are in truth largely paid for out of taxes, rates, and fees.

VII.

The re-endowment of the group of sects calling themselves the Church of England is not more important nor more mischievous in its effect on national instruction than the indirect influence of various kinds which has been placed, and according to present appearances permanently placed, in the hands of the clergy. To give them the schools is to give them a new platform, a new instrument, a new organ of power—paid for by public money, and instituted by the law of the land. To do this is to augment their social authority and to strengthen their sectarian power. Do the English constituencies in their hearts desire either of these results? The resolution of five years ago to pull down the Protestant establishment in Ireland is the answer to such a question as this.

Our people have an instinctive distrust of clerical influence—a distrust which often takes vulgar and even unjust forms, but which is at bottom one of the soundest and shrewdest of all our national impulses. What respect can we have in a time of active scientific inquiry for men who at the age of three-and-twenty bind themselves in heavy penalties never again to use their minds freely so long as they live? We may look upon the victims of these emasculating vows with more or less of friendly tolerance and personal sympathy, but it is impossible to forget that as an order they move through the world of light and knowledge, of discovery and criticism and new truth, with bandaged eyes and muffled ears. They are in their non-official relations as amiable, kindly, well-meaning as other bodies of men, if you will only excuse them from using their minds out of the prescribed bounds, or from coming to other than the prescribed conclusions. They are ever warning the world against science falsely so called, by which they mean the principal triumphs of genius and industry; and you can hardly go into a church without hearing a sermon against that abuse of intellect, that pride of reason, which is the awful and desolating mark of these latter days. Laymen cannot discuss with figures in masks, fearful of gainsaying an article, or infringing a rubric, or slipping beyond a judgment of the Privy Council. “There appears to me in all the English divines,” said Dr. Arnold, “a want of believing or disbelieving anything because it is true

or false. It is a question which does not seem to occur to them." This is really the case. It is as true of the most obscure, as of the most illustrious of these divines; of the village rector as of the primate; and if the valorous man who made this most just remark had lived, he would have found it especially true of some distinguished laymen and divines who were inspired at Rugby.

It has been contended that dissenting ministers are as narrow, as hostile to science, as ungenerously cultivated, as little imbued with faith and hope in progress, as the clergy of the established church. I question the fact, but what if they are? However narrow they may be, at least they do not impudently ask the state to give them my money for teaching their opinions. They attend to their own doctrines and leave me to mine. I am in no way concerned with the religious notions of dissenting ministers, because dissenters claim neither money nor position nor official recognition in virtue of these notions. I am concerned with the notions of the state clergy, because the clergy aspire to control the instruction of the people, and to make the tax-gatherers and rate-collectors provide them with funds.

A little shiver of intellectual liberalism in some of the more courageous of the Anglican clergy should not blind us to the intensely obscurantist character of the rank and file. It is of no avail to point to the tiny handful of clergymen who accept liberal and modern ideas, from Dr. Thirlwall downwards. Such

men, like Mr. Jowett and other academic liberals of his stamp, as well as the head masters of some of the public schools, are only clergymen by accident. They do not belong to the clerical profession. If any one wants to understand the real composition of the great clerical army, he should read the proceedings of the two houses of Convocation. It is here that we perceive the clerical mind in its nakedness—here, or in petitions for the recognition of the practice of auricular confession, or in remonstrances against the appointment of Dr. Temple, or in applications for a faculty to set up a baldacchino, or in such papers as the *Church Times*, which curses “the miserable Protestants,” and the *Rock* and the *Record*, which curse “the miserable Ritualists,” or in such protestations as that of so comparatively modern and enlightened a person as Mr. Kingsley, that life will be worth very very little to him if there is to be any tampering with that priceless monument of wisdom and charity, the Athanasian Creed.

And we have to remember that all the movement is in this direction; is towards what the Primate the other day called “strong opinions.” These widening extremes of repulsion are in the nature of things. As the speculation of the age drifts further and further away from the too narrow contents of the ancient formularies, those who cling to these formularies cling to them all the more tightly, and interpret them all the more superstitiously. Twenty years ago you could not have found five hundred men in English orders

to petition for auricular confession. To-day we have an eminent dignitary thanking the Almighty that "priests by thousands are teaching and practising private confession." The old-fashioned moderation of doctrine is changed into enthusiasm and excess, and our age of science is also the age of deepening superstition and reviving sacerdotalism. The same tendency is at work in that older church which emulates the zeal of the Church of England for sectarian teaching. There, too, the spread of liberal ideas has engendered a vehement reaction, and the catholic piety of an older time has been transformed into the black and anti-social aggression of the Syllabus and the Encyclical.

Yet these are the bodies, standing thus markedly in hostility to all the progressive tendencies of the time, which it has been thought statesmanlike and liberal to invest with a new kind of social authority, and formally to re-entrust with a most important social function. While the statesmen of every other country in Europe, from Austria downwards, are fully aware that the priests had too much power, it was left for liberal leaders in England to find out that priests had too little power, and straightway to hasten to make it greater. This is no wrangle about the drawing of a clause, no dispute as to the payment of a few hundred pounds a year. It is the very gravest question of public policy that could have been raised, and can only be understood by those who take the very widest measure of political expediency.

It is no answer to our contention of the retrograde direction of the course that the Liberal leaders have pursued, to repeat the worn assertions that the English clergy are not as other clergy, that they have never been a caste apart from the rest of men, that they are connected with the public life of the country in many ways, that they are English gentlemen before they are clergymen, and so forth. The English clergy are not ultramontane, if you mean that, and they are not celibate nor childless, nor have they by any means taken vows of poverty or obedience. But they represent a strong and resolute corporate spirit in spite of these humanizing conditions, and in spite of the deep mutual hatred of the rival factions of which they are composed. They may fill the air with remonstrances and petitions and gravamina against one another, but they always close their ranks against the common enemy. A Broad churchman will resent the formation of a School-board in his parish as energetically as the sacerdotalist. Individually often mild and candid, collectively they are always as narrow, intolerant, and angry as circumstances permit. For individual clergymen one often has, and cannot but have, the warmest respect and affection; like other men, they are often full of that milk of human kindness which is dearer to us than light and dearer than new ideas. But they are seldom strong enough to resist the overwhelming pressure of the organization to which they belong, and few persons reflect how closely and in how many forms this organization

comes to the life of the ordinary working clergyman. He has his company drill, his regimental drill, his brigade drill, his battalion drill; he is banded with his fellows as a unit in the ruridecanal system, in the archidiaconal system, in the diocesan system. The habit of acting together in bodies which broadens and strengthens other citizens by forcing them to sacrifice personal prejudices for the sake of a public cause, narrows and weakens the priest by forcing him to sacrifice his civic impulse for the sake of mere ecclesiastical ends. They all alike come to distrust the lay mind. Above all, they are secretly big with the consciousness that they represent a great dominant organization, which some of them believe to be the mystic creation of saints and apostles, and others more prosaically believe to come from the Act of Uniformity, but which on either theory confers on its ministers the blessed rights of classifying dissent with beerhouses, and of despising and denouncing all who use their minds independently as schismatical, heretical, and anti-social.

We have no wish to carry rationalistic criticism, either of the clergy or any other existing corporation, too far. Many an institution that cannot stand purely rationalistic tests is yet not in any way worth attacking, and may in many circumstances be well worth defending. We are not now concerned with the question of church government, nor with the internecine feuds of church parties, nor with the scandals of neo-Catholicism, nor the scandals of neo-Chris-

tianity. The question is not theological but political, not doctrinal but social. The state church stands for a decaying order of ideas, and for ideas that grow narrower and more intense in proportion as they fall more out of harmony with the intellectual life of the time. What statesmanship is that which, at a time like this and with such an outlook, invests its priests with a new function, and entrusts afresh a holy army of misologists with the control of national instruction? Is it expedient in constituting and defining a great department of the state organization, which must depend for its vitality and efficiency on the amount of interest, sympathy, and active co-operation that may gradually be provoked in the body of the people, to attach it to the retrogressive or stationary elements in our civil life rather than to its progressive elements; to place its springs in the emulation of sects rather than in the disinterested energies of the nation?

Champions of sectarianism and bureaucrats from the Education Department may tell us that the nation cannot be trusted with the provision of instruction; that there is in England very little real love of instruction, very little real faith in it, very little confidence that we shall be really any the better for it. To this I reply by two remarks. First, even if it be true that laymen are thus distrustful of the worth of secular instruction, thus indifferent to its efficient provision, the clergy have not shown themselves any less so. The lowness of the standards, the fewness of the children who pass even in the higher of these, the

avowedly sectarian purposes of the schools as shown in the prolonged resistance to a Conscience Clause and other ways—these are the proofs that the clergy care as little for good elementary instruction as the laity are alleged to care.¹ Secondly, it is the fundamental assumption of a popular as distinguished from a paternal system of government, that a nation which is not too backward to be capable of managing its own affairs, may be awakened to its responsibilities, and that boldly to throw these responsibilities upon its citizens is the best way of making sure that they will be fulfilled. There is a profound saying that if you would improve a man, it is well to let him suppose that you already believe him such as you would have him to be. This is even more true of a nation than it is of an individual. To insist that the clergy are the only body who can be trusted with the control of education, even if it be not a calumny

¹ Consider this one fact. Nowhere are the clergy stronger than in the county of Lancaster, the new fastness of Conservatism. In this county no less than 40 per cent. of the women married in 1870 could not sign their own names, and had to make their mark in the register! We shall see whether the prudence, zeal, benevolence, and proved capacity of Bishop Fraser will make any impression on his retrograde clergy. At present, if anything specially atrocious or silly is said on public matters, we may be sure that its author is a clergyman from Lancashire; for instance, the charitable gentleman who cried out not long ago, at a public meeting at Darwen, that “he thanked God he was not a dissenter.”

At Keighley, in Yorkshire, the ratepayers were polled for or against a School-board. The voting papers showed that 37 per cent. of the supporters of the Denominational system signed their names with a mark. Of the opponents of the Denominational system, who were in a decisive minority, only 7 per cent. were compelled to resort to this device. In one district, out of 194 opponents of a board, 120 signed with a mark; in other words those who are most sorely in need of a new system are the easiest and most numerous dupes of the partisans of the old.

on English patriotism, as I for one am convinced that it is, still implies a deep misapprehension of the way in which new public interests may be excited, and of the degree in which a people accustomed to self-government is capable of responding to a new demand. Unhappily this misapprehension seized the very ministers who had come into power on a tide of national enthusiasm, of which the main force was derived from hopes of a great measure of national education. Instead of preparing the way for the ecclesiastical changes which they must know sooner or later to be inevitable, they could think of nothing more hopeful than a law for re-invigorating the state church in functions which are not proper to it, and discouraging to a corresponding degree the willingness of the better part of the laity to undertake functions which can never be justly and efficiently discharged on any other terms.

It is not merely a decaying order of ideas that the ministers of the state church exist to advocate. They represent the forces of social, no less than of intellectual, reaction. There would be no great harm in this, perhaps, were it not that their assumption of the civilizing offices is taken to discharge laymen from the active performance of social duty. This is no discredit to the clergy. On the contrary, it is to their credit, though it is to the discredit of the laity and the great detriment of the community that this care for the poor in country districts, alike in education and in other matters, is thus delegated to the priestly

order. But mark the sympathies of the priestly order. It has often been said that the Church of England is a democratic institution—apparently for no better reason than that plebeian curates sometimes marry into the best families. We have now an opportunity of seeing how much the priestly order cares for the poor common people. The first current of a strange social agitation is passing over the land. At last, after generations of profound torpor, our eyes discern slow stirrings among the serfs of the field. The uncouth Atlantes who have for generations upborne the immense structure of civilization in which they have no lot, have at length made a sign. The huge dumb figure has tried to shift a little from a position of insufferable woe. Little may come of it. The current may soon spend itself; the monstrous burden soon settle pitilessly down again on the heavy unconquerable shoulders. The many are so weak, the few are so strong; the conditions of social organization shut effort so fast within an iron circle. However this may be, the attempt is being made by a company of poor men to win a few pence more for the week's toil, to raise the mere material conditions of life for their wives and their children a little further away from the level of the lives of brute beasts. What sympathy, or counsel, or help, or word of God-speed, or word of compassionate warning, have they had from the men who pretend to be spiritually descended in line of apostolic succession from the chosen companions and followers of the divine in-

carnation of human pity? What comment have we had in this singular crisis on the sacred text that the peacemakers are blessed? Such men as Bishop Elliott and the two magistrates of Chipping Norton may tell us, and they are presumably not any more brutal than other Anglican feeders of Christ's sheep. And the labourers themselves tell us every week, how keenly they are alive to the angry enmity of the clergy, and how eternally they will resent it.¹ Their phrases are harsh, rough, inelegant; they have at least the eloquence of a bitter sincerity; there is much excuse for men brutalised by adversity, ignorance, and hard usage, there is none for men brutalised by prosperity and comfortable living. In short, the national church has once more shown itself not the church of the nation, but the church of a class; not the benign counsellor and helpful protectress of the poor, but the mean serving-maid of the rich. She is as inveterate a foe to a new social hope as we know her to be to a new scientific truth.

To sum up this part of the subject. First, the pretensions of the state church in the face of dissent are the bane of spiritual and intellectual life in England. How can religion be a truly civilizing force in a society, while one half of its preachers are incessantly struggling for social mastery over the other half, and, like the late Dr. Wilberforce, denouncing dissent as a co-equal cause with beerhouses in producing rural immorality? These pretensions are ratified and con-

¹ *The Labourers' Union Chronicle*, almost any week.

firmed by the working of the Education Act. Secondly, some of the strongest tendencies of the age are stimulating ecclesiasticism, and inflaming its ardour, and drawing it further apart from the really vital elements of national life. Thus, in fine, the present educational policy divorces machinery from force. The nation can only be efficiently instructed through the agency of men who have faith in intelligence, and ample hope of social improvement. The Anglican clergy have as a body shown themselves to be without either one or the other. Like every other corporation representing great privileged sects, they identify all their aspiration and all their effort with the extension and confirmation of sectarian supremacy. All that they understand by higher national life is a more undisputed ecclesiastical authority. If liberalism means anything at all beyond a budget of sounding phrases, such ideas are thoroughly retrograde, and any policy that countenances them is a policy of retrogression, or in other words is the very climax of impolicy. True statesmanship lies in right discernment of the progressive forces of a given society, in strenuous development of them, and in courageous reliance upon them. Even a sensible bishop might smile in his lawn sleeves, if he heard of the clergy of the Church of England being the depositaries of the progressive forces of the nation.

VIII.

So much for the general expediency of present policy in view of future national growth. We may pass on to consider what is called the religious difficulty in a more special sense. "The nation," it is contended, "has shown in a hundred different ways its invincible hostility to anything like the exclusion of religious instruction from the schools. It is wholly alien from all our established traditions of government to attempt to force any system upon the country which the country itself does not willingly accept. Any departure from these traditions would be exceptionally impolitic in a matter so delicate as the education of the children of the poor. If you are going to interfere with all the weight of state authority to compel the parent to send his child to school, in most cases at a certain immediate sacrifice to himself, you will at least do well not to add to the enormous difficulties of your undertaking by provoking the religious conscience of the parent into the bargain. To set up a secular school system would be doing the utmost violence to this religious conscience, and you would never be able to work it, even if it were proved expedient on theoretical grounds to give the young an education from which religion should be omitted."

Let us notice in passing that this forcible plea for the relief of the parental conscience, this tender anxiety for religious rights, is most vehemently urged

by the party that has for a whole generation opposed a Conscience Clause with might and main, and the trust-deeds of whose schools in nearly every case contained a fundamental rule that all the children should be compelled to attend the Anglican church and the Anglican Sunday-school. This solemn warning to us to revere the parent's religious scruple is prodigiously touching on the lips of the men who for half a century forced the children of dissenters to come to services and Sunday-school instruction which the parents abhorred, or else refused to admit them to the only secular instruction that was within their reach. "What, you wish to rob the parent of the right to choose his child's religious teaching!"—this from the men who for fifty years, in conformity with the trust-deeds of their schools and the rules of the great National Society, systematically robbed the dissenting parent of the right of taking his child to his own place of worship or his own Sunday-school!

The plea, however, may be worth something, though urged in a false spirit by men whose whole tradition is an arrogant repudiation of it. The answer to it is so simple, so obvious, and has been so constantly kept before the public, that one is half ashamed of again reproducing such trite matter. Only in the struggle with a huge vested interest, strong by its privileges and inveterate in its prejudices, a politician is forced, in spite of literary fastidiousness, to keep stating and restating with indefatigable iteration an elementary principle of justice and a mere rudiment

of political prudence. Parents have an inalienable right to choose the kind of religious instruction which their children shall receive. No one disputes that. Our simple contention is that along with this right of choosing their religious instruction, goes the duty of paying for it. If I say to the parent, "Your child shall not be allowed to receive instruction in Catholic doctrine, or in Baptist doctrine," I am a tyrant. If the parent should say to me, "I insist that you shall pay for instructing my child in doctrines which you do not accept," then it is he who is the tyrant. Yet nothing less than this is involved in the present educational system. We are teaching the religion of some with money raised by the taxation of all. Every man, as has been said, pays for the religion of everybody else—the bad principle which we all supposed to have been permanently abandoned by English statesmen when church-rates disappeared, until Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Forster revived it.

Writers for the newspapers, who have not always time to think about the terms they use, have the face to insist that we are for depriving the majority of the community of the right of giving their children a religious education. What we really seek is to deprive the majority of the right of making the minority pay for giving this religious education to other people's children. No one now has a word to say in favour of church-rates, yet the principle of church-rates and the principle of grants and local rates to denominational schools are identical. The only dif-

ference is that justice and reason have been brought to bear on one application of this principle and not on the other. "Few are the partisans of departed tyranny," said Burke, "and to be a Whig on the business of a hundred years ago is very consistent with every advantage of present servility. Retrospective wisdom and historical patriotism are things of wonderful convenience."

Then we are told by the easy people who think any slipshod reasoning good enough for politics, that as the dissenters have their religious instruction paid for out of the taxes and rates of churchmen, they cannot seriously complain of having to pay taxes and rates for Anglican instruction. To which slovenly argument we reply, first, that it is no consolation to people who suffer an injustice in more than three-fourths of the schools, that they have a chance of retaliating in the remaining fourth.

Secondly, that the dissenters do not desire to have sectarian teaching in their day-schools, but only the reading of the Bible, and therefore they do not desire to have the chance of making churchmen pay for the dissemination of the principles of dissent.

Thirdly, that owing to the way in which the dissenting population is distributed, any one of its sects is not only in a minority in the whole as against the Church of England, but is always in a minority in the several parts (except in Wales), and therefore the Church of England is always strong enough to secure the establishment of its own sectarian school, even if

obliged to assent to the establishment of an unsectarian one by the side of it.

Fourthly, there is a not wholly inconsiderable body of taxpayers and ratepayers who do not desire to have any religious instruction for their children whatever, and who therefore are absolutely cut off from that singular and most sweet compensation for having to pay for what you hate, that you can make other people in turn pay in the same proportion for what they hate. On all these grounds the notion that wrong becomes right if you only complete the circle, is seen to be as gross a fallacy in public as in private transactions, and those who resort to it only venture to do so in the just confidence that bad logic goes as far as good in persuading those who have got what they want that they ought to be allowed to keep it.

We are next told that the ratepayers, when asked to speak for themselves, reply all over the kingdom by overwhelming majorities that their consciences revolt against any system of education of which religion is not a part. As if *in religious affairs* it were not a settled principle of our government that the majority, however great it may be, and however strenuous its convictions, shall still not force the conscience of the minority. We force Quakers to pay for war, and Peculiar People to call in doctors. But the protection of the realm and the protection of life are secular ends, not religious ends, like teaching the catechism. I know nothing grosser, nothing which shows more strongly how sectarian supremacy coarsens and cor-

rupts the sense of justice, nothing which illustrates more decisively how little people even now either comprehend or accept our vaunted axioms of religious liberty, unless they happen to be on the losing side, than this habitual assumption that because the members of the Church of England are in the majority in most parishes, therefore they have a right to make the minority pay for their schools and for the teaching of church doctrine. And the assumption is particularly flagitious in the members of a church that only a few years ago wrung the tithe on which its ministers subsisted from the Catholic cottiers of Ireland, and extorted church-cess for maintaining the fabric of the minority from ratepayers who were in a majority against it of seven or eight to one. In Ireland the conscience of the majority counted for nothing, in England it is the conscience of the minority that counts for nothing. Really Jesuit casuistry is a system of rigid moral inflexibility compared with our state church, which never knows how to be true to a single principle, nor how to respect a single general maxim, except the mean principle and the unchristian maxim that her own poor prerogatives are all, and the free consciences of men are naught. Some writers in the public press who ought to know better have borrowed the ecclesiastical vein, and made merry over the ratepayer's scruple. Judging from their own readiness to comply with the formalities of a creed which they no more believe than Voltaire did, they impute to others their own indifference; and because they are willing

without ado to burn a pinch of incense in the temple of the gods, they can see nothing but besotted fanaticism or odious hypocrisy, or at best unspeakable childishness, in those who still think that one creed is more true than another, and still show some earnestness in their preference. Surely there is not so much conscience to spare in modern society that we can afford to sneer at any manifestation of it which may happen to inconvenience ourselves, as a piece of puerile scrupulosity and ridiculous niceness.

The last sophism of the advocates of the system of making the whole country pay for the religion of the richer part is that public money does not pay for the religious teaching, but only for the secular. So far as the parliamentary grants are concerned I have already considered this position, and already shown that in subsidising the denominational system the government subsidises all the incidents of the system, denominational teaching included. In the case of rate-supported schools—and Mr. Forster professed to expect this kind of school to increase in number—the sophism is still more barefaced. These schools live on rates and grants, that is, from rates and taxes. Therefore if the ratepayer and the taxpayer do not pay for the religious teaching, who does pay for it? The children with their pence? At the Manchester schools of which we have already spoken, did the five pounds which were voluntarily subscribed in one case; and the single pound which was subscribed in the other, exactly suffice to pay for the religious instruction?

Our heedless opponents will hardly say this, and they may be left to find a way out of their position as they best can.

Let us look this question of the parent's conscience boldly in the face, not like fanatics, but like politicians in face of a practical task. Now what is the limit and intention of state interference in any part of education? With education in the largest and most complete sense the state has nothing to do. It only professes to deal with that narrow portion of education which is described as secular instruction, and it is a great pity that we are obliged to give the wider name to the question, because unscrupulous or inconsiderate persons have been enabled to say that we want to force a godless education on the poor, and the like falsehoods. The state is only concerned with the supply and regulation of secular instruction. As Mr. Gladstone himself expressed it, "The duty of the state is to make use of the voluntary schools for the purposes of the secular instruction which they give, but *to hold itself entirely and absolutely detached from all responsibility with regard to their religious teaching.*"¹

You may say that this is to degrade the state. Possibly. But whether or no, this is the principle already accepted and already acted upon, and distinctly formulated. Religious inspection is now given up. Payments from the public funds are in theory strictly confined to proficiency in secular knowledge. Public money will be given just as readily and on precisely the

¹ Speech in the House of Commons, June 24, 1870.

same terms to purely secular schools. Above all, every school manager who accepts the Conscience Clause accepts this principle, and agrees that, excepting for a certain time at the beginning or end, or the beginning and end, of the work of the school, the instruction given in the school shall be as purely secular, irreligious, godless, as in any school in the land. It is not we who begin to make the schools secular. That is already done in principle in every public elementary school, denominational or otherwise, by the first and second sub-sections of the seventh clause of the Elementary Education Act of 1870.¹ When the clergy surrendered the Conscience Clause, they instantly became parties to the very system of education which they choose to call godless. How—asks the vivacious editor of a well-known religious newspaper—how can a man teach geography without Genesis? The illustration does not strike me as happy, for in truth I see no more connection between geography and Genesis than between Macedon and Monmouth. But, at any rate, if anybody teaches religion out of the time set in the table, he is violating the contract he has made with the government, and either forfeiting his grant or else procuring it fraudulently. And hence the absurd

¹ “It shall not be required, as a condition of any child being admitted into or continuing in the school, that he shall attend any religious observance, or any instruction in religious subjects in the school or elsewhere.”

“The time or times during which any religious observance is practised, or instruction in religious subjects is given at any meeting of the school, shall be either at the beginning or at the end, or at the beginning and the end, of each meeting.”—33 & 34 Vict., c. 75, § 7.

folly of the Bishop of Peterborough—we humbly borrow for once the Bishop of Peterborough's own particular phrase for describing what he does not agree with—in his memorable assertion that all instruction that excludes religious teaching is atheistic. As if religious teaching were not excluded from every State-aided school both in the diocese of Peterborough and every other diocese in England during some five-sixths of the school-time. So that if his description be correct, the Church schools are atheistic institutions for nearly the whole of the solid day. The clergy and the clerically-minded journalists do not see that the Conscience Clause makes every public elementary school in the land a secular school pure and simple, except for a short and specified time daily. Some of the clergy do see this, and act consistently and honourably by withdrawing their schools from government inspection and participation in parliamentary grants; Archdeacon Denison, for instance. Prebendary Kemble at the meeting of the Bath and Wells Diocesan Conference in August (1873), said that “what he felt very strongly with regard to this Act and government intervention was the godless and irreligious character of the Conscience Clause. A school he maintained in a neighbouring diocese which used to receive a considerable government grant, he had withdrawn altogether from government supervision, rather than hang up the Conscience Clause.” These are clearly the words of a man of integrity and accurate judgment. The Conscience Clause *is* godless and irreligious, if we choose

to import this particular kind of language. When the religious journalist insists that history and geography should be penetrated with religious significance, when the organ of the National Society demands that "the whole school-time of a child" should lead up to making the child a communicant of the Church of England, these devout persons are simply inciting the teachers and school managers clandestinely to break their bargain with the state, and to obtain the state money on false pretences. This is the plain truth. They are preaching a fraud.

That in practice the Conscience Clause is often contravened in spirit if not in letter is tolerably well known. No legal enactment can prevent the clerical manager from refusing to allow any children who are withdrawn from religious instruction or from attendance at church or Sunday school, to compete for prizes, or to share the school treat, and cases have been brought forward of double fees being charged to the children of dissenters. Mr. Forster has repeatedly asked those who deny the effectiveness of the Conscience Clause why they do not bring cases of its infraction before the Department. To this, we may reply first that such cases have been brought before the Department;¹ second, that there is obviously great difficulty in finding them out, as the places

¹ One of the Inspectors in the last Blue Book reports that as a result of his visits of surprise he found "the time-table violated, and in one or two cases the Conscience Clause infringed." (Mr. Bowstead's Report for 1872, p. 47.) Now were the schools in these one or two cases punished or not? And if not, why not?

where they are likely to happen are usually the furthest removed from the public eye and ear; and thirdly, that it is by indirect rather than direct means that the supposed protection of the Clause is nullified. We are naturally ready to give to clergymen the same credit for honour and law-abidingness as we give to other men. But then clergymen somehow are not exactly like other men. They are very apt to look at laws as those people do, who never can be taught that it is wrong to smuggle or to cheat a railway company. None but clergymen would think it honest to draw pay for forcing what they call Catholic practices and Catholic truth into a Protestant establishment. Indeed one can hardly imagine a more admirable training for a low-class attorney than a short apprenticeship to one of these heroic Anglicans, whose whole lives seem spent in finding out by how many little devices of costume, lights, banners, processions, practices, postures, they can strain and evade the law without being convicted and punished. The organ of the rising party in the Church has actually enjoined upon the clergy to hear confessions in spite of the mandate of the Ordinary to whom he has sworn obedience; for "who is to know when a priest is hearing a confession, or when he is arguing in the vestry with a Congregationalist enquirer upon, let us say, the divine institution of episcopacy?"¹ Tartufe was a man of honour, a creature of a fine moral sense, compared with this sly priest, solacing or chastening

¹ Leading article in the *Church Times* for July 4.

the penitent soul, tongue in cheek. If he will cheat his bishop, are we to blame if we suspect him of willingness to cheat the law? Liberal clergymen used to evade the clauses in the trust-deeds making attendance at church compulsory on the children. Why should not illiberal clergymen now show equal ingenuity for ends which they think equally laudable? It is not our fault if we are suspicious of clerical loyalty in administering the Conscience Clause, when we are confronted on every side by open declarations that a teacher should not attempt to teach geography without Genesis; that the whole school-time of a child should lead up to making him an Anglican communicant; that so long as you have sectarian teachers, it is of secondary importance under what regulations they carry on their work, for "such as the teacher is, such will be the school." "The time has come," says the National Society, "when probably the whole fate of the Church of England will turn upon the hold she may have upon the rising generation. Political changes are giving more and more power to the people. If the church have the people with her, she will be beyond all power of adverse legislation. Let her, then, educate the children of the people in her principles. Let her, as we said above, *not only teach them to be good Christians; let her teach them to be good churchmen. The National schools of England are the training ground of English churchmen.* Let not the opportunity be lost; let EVERY child, who leaves a National school be fortified with a sound training in

the distinctive theology of the church, as well as in secular elements, and in due time the results will be seen in the loyalty of the people to their spiritual mother, and their ready championship of her cause in any hour of danger that may arrive in the course of political events.”¹

Whatever practical evasions of the law may take place, and whether they be few or many, the principle laid down by the law, and accepted by the manager of every State-aided school in the country, is clearly this—that secular instruction is the only part of education for which the state pays or with which it is in any way concerned, and that secular instruction is capable of being imparted, and must by law be imparted in all such schools without any admixture of religious instruction. The separation between secular and religious teaching which the clergy now denounce as atheistic, was actually petitioned for by the archbishop of Dublin and many of the Irish bishops and clergy in a memorial to the Privy Council in 1866. What was orthodox in Ireland is atheistic in England. This is only another instance of the flagitious want of principle which marks the course of the clerical party. At any rate, here is the principle of the law as it stands. We others have so far no conversion to make, though we have a gigantic task to perform in persuading people to recognise the principle they have formally conceded, and to act on the recognition.

• From one of the *Monthly Papers*, published in 1871.

For the worst of a concession made by Conservatives or ecclesiastics is that you must never hurt their feelings by acting upon it. Thus they introduced household suffrage, transferring power to the common people, whenever they choose to unite in the use of it. The moment you appeal to the common people as the depositaries of power, you are denounced as a revolutionist and an ochlocrat. And so with the Conscience Clause. In accepting this, they distinctly excluded religion from the hours of secular instruction. The moment you take them at their word, and assume that they have really separated religious from secular teaching, they break out against you as heathens and godless. A Conservative would seem to be so-called from his tenacity in keeping what he has long given away.

The state, then, imposes on the parent the duty of submitting his children to a certain amount of drill in secular instruction, just as in some other countries the state insists on universal submission to a course of military drill. The attendance on this instruction is as purely a secular duty as the payment of taxes. A parent who comes forward and declines to let his children attend school unless they receive religious instruction, might as well decline to pay his taxes unless the State would guarantee a mass for his soul or provide him with a chaplain. Secular instruction is one thing, and religious instruction is something quite different. No one who accepts government aid on condition of a Conscience Clause can deny this

absolute separation. The state has no more to do with the provision of religious instruction, than it has to do with the provision of a band of music for each parish. That is the affair of those who want music or who want religious instruction. There is no prohibition, nor wish to prohibit. There is only absolute neutrality and indifference.

Now it is perfectly well known by all who have taken the pains to inquire into the subject that this supposed eagerness of the parent to send his child to a school of a special denomination is a mere invention of the clergy and the priests. It does not exist. What a parent wants is a school that is convenient. Let us take from actual experience an important illustration how artificial this cry is. The London School-board remits to divisional tribunals the cases of parents who are summoned for neglecting to send their children to school, and who plead poverty. These are the cases coming under the Seventeenth and Twenty Fifth clauses. The divisional tribunal has the power of recommending the Board to remit or pay the fees. In either case, whether of remission or payment, the parent is of course absolutely free to select the school to which he will have the child sent. In the Greenwich division the four divisional members constitute the tribunal, and take its duties each a month in turn. Their district embraces a population of 200,000, of all classes, from the gentility of Sydenham down to the most miserable parts of Deptford. What happens? "Eighteen months" experience on this tribunal,"

writes the Rev. Mr. Waugh, to whose courtesy I am indebted for this information, "leave this fact: that *not in one single case* where a parent has chosen a denominational school, has he done so because it was a denominational school. In every case the 'choice' was made because there was no choice. In the immediate locality of the chooser's home, there were no schools for girls but denominational schools, or else, there were no schools for boys but denominational schools, or no schools for infants but denominational schools. Where the family consisted of boys and girls, and the locality provided schools for boys under the Board, and for girls under the Church, or *vice versa*, one half of the family attended Board schools, and the other half Church schools. In *not one single case has a denominational school been preferred for any other than physical or geographical reasons.*" The scruple of the indigent parent is thus seen, in this immense district at any rate, to be a figment. Another member of the London School-board writes to me:—"My experience quite coincides with Mr. Waugh's, that the parents who come before the divisional committee, of which I am a member, are quite indifferent to the religious question, and the main points are convenience of locality or lowness of fee charged to the scholars." A clergyman in the east end of London tells a story of a good widow whose children were in the habit of attending the church school. One day he noticed that two of these children were absent, and on inquiry learned that

they had ceased to attend, and were now going to a British school. He went to the mother and asked her pleasantly why she had withdrawn two of her children from his school? "Why, sir," she answered, "the truth is, that between this and your school there are two very dangerous crossings, and I was afraid of the youngest being run over, so I thought I might as well send it to the Dissenting school; and then the other one has to go to take care of it." That is the common-sense account of parental scruple in this matter. The clergy and the priests have done their best to stimulate the parents to feign this eager conscientiousness. They have failed. But the device was too good to be thrown away, so, hollow invention as it is, they have given it the main place on their banner.

Still as we have to work the system, we must meet as well as we can the prejudices excited by this artificial and spurious cry. Now what objection can the clergy make to the scheme which meets the conscientious objections of the dissenting or secularist ratepayer by taking the function of imparting religious instruction from the secular teacher, and then meets the conscientious objection of the scrupulous parent by empowering the clergyman or the priest or some one deputed by him, other than the schoolmaster or schoolmistress, to give religious instruction at a distinct time, just as it is now given at a distinct time? If the parent really wants his child to have religious instruction in the week-day, his child has it. If the clergyman is really anxious that the young of his

flock should be instructed in the word and the doctrine, who can teach with such fulness of knowledge or exhort with such amplitude of authority as himself?¹ If the state aid really supports only the secular instruction, what heavier call will there be upon voluntary aid than there is now? The parent's conscience is satisfied. The ratepayer's conscience is not forced.

It may be said that this is only adding still more directly to clerical power, and augmenting the clerical element in education. Such an objection is unreal. The schoolmaster, as it is, teaches what the clergyman, who is his master, tells him to teach, and he dare not do otherwise. And therefore a parish with an unpopular clergyman would be no worse off in the tenour of the religious instruction imparted to its children, than it is now. The great advantage gained would be that the lay teacher would come fresh to the secular instruction, would look to that as other men look to their professions, would not be distracted by alien subjects. This is the point which seems to the

¹ The Bishop of Manchester, an excellent authority, has declared this solution to be compatible with adequate religious instruction. "He did not think that it was a fair description of the work of the Birmingham League to say that they went in for secularism pure and simple. So far as schools come down upon the rates or upon the taxes of the country for support, so far they said, in view of the present difficulties and divisions, instruction should be secular; but every religious body might retain the full use and possession of that school outside the time for secular instruction, providing their own teachers at their own cost. He was not saying that this was the programme that he individually would most desire to see; but if they were only faithful to their own convictions, if all they had been talking about religious education in their different parishes had any meaning at all, and was not merely talk, they certainly had still, as managers and teachers of such schools, ample scope and opportunity for indoctrinating their children with that sound religious teaching they thought most conducive to their welfare."—Extract from a speech delivered in Convocation at York, February, 1872.

present writer by far the most important—to improve the aims and heighten the self-respect of the teacher, by showing him that the state puts him in a definite, an independent, an honourable post with specified functions. The separation of religious from secular instruction in the person of the teacher, no less than in the time of giving it, is as indispensable a condition of this, though by no means the only condition, as it is an indispensable condition of putting an end to the wrangling among the parish sects. What we want, is to erect secular teaching among the class who go to these elementary schools, into a distinct and recognised department of national activity and public duty. Until this is done, you will never have good teaching, and you will never have in your people any hearty recognition of the value of knowledge. •

IX.

But, it will be said, religious instruction will suffer. As one of the most prominent defenders of Mr. Forster's policy writes to me:—"Religion can only be taught to boys effectually by the lay master. It [*i.e.* teaching by the clergyman] would only be regarded as an insufferable bore." This is a pleasant compliment to his spiritual friends, but let us see what the effectual teaching of religion by the lay master really comes to, when put into plain English. The answer shall come from an authority whose friendliness to our adversaries is beyond suspicion. Canon Norris is reporting the results of the examination of candidates for admission into the Training Colleges. Four-fifths

of the candidates were pupil-teachers. "I have the papers," he says, "of the 217 who failed last Christmas before me: there is not one of them that would not be considered disgraceful by a panel of a dozen teachers or clergymen. . . . Two-thirds of the pupil-teachers failed to obtain half-marks." And this is admittedly a religious examination of the most elementary kind. "In 1871 I inquired of 500 students in Training Colleges how many had received assistance in their religious studies from their clergy during their apprenticeship, and ascertained that only 42 out of the 500 (or 12 per cent.¹) had been instructed or even examined by their clergy in this part of their work." "And if the pupil-teachers be thus ignorant," says the organ of the National Society with plaintive groan, "what must be the condition of the children who have not had the same advantages?"² This is no Birmingham invention, no Nonconformist calumny. Every Diocesan Inspector's report tells the same tale of poor and unsatisfactory answers, "showing unmistakably that the whole preparation for them consists in a few days' hasty cramming." The pupils know a few bare facts, but they do not know their connection with one another, while even "the Catechism itself is neither accurately learnt nor intelligently understood."³

¹ This is an error! Canon Norris has divided 500 by 42, instead of 42 by 5, and he means about a *twelfth*, or $8\frac{2}{3}$ ths per cent. This makes a bad percentage very much worse.

² National Society's *Monthly Paper* for May, 1873, p. 99.

³ National Society's *Monthly Paper* for June, 1873.

Let the reader calmly weigh the significance of this. Consider the light it throws on all this dire contention. The children no more learn religion than they learn anything else. It is on their own authority that we thus know, what every sensible man suspected before, that if the results of the secular teaching of the sectarian schools are unworthy and despicable beyond all estimation, the results of their religious teaching are more unworthy and despicable still. Yet it is for this poor ragged tatter and pretence of serious religious instruction, this scanty covering of spiritual nakedness with a few catechismal thrums, that the parent's conscience is said to yearn with a yearning that will not be gainsaid! The same parent, be it observed, who is commonly described as "neither earnest nor religious, but apathetic and slothful," and whose apathy and sloth are the reasons alleged why religion, if it is to be learnt at all, must be learnt at school.¹ What clearer evidence is needed than the fact of this ignorance and apathy on the part of previous generations of school-goers, combined with the fact of the utter and avowed badness of the religious instruction which is given to the school-goers of the present generation, to persuade us that this noisy cry on the parent's behalf for a religious education is entirely hollow and artificial, merely invented to serve a turn in the contest for the maintenance of an external sectarian supremacy? They impose on the world with the sounding phrase of religious

• ¹ National Society's *Monthly Paper* for May, 1873, p. 96.

education. Yet it seems after all that the thing itself has no effectual existence in the schools. This good and effective religious education for which there is such strife is a myth. "Long before the passing of the Act of 1870," says the Principal of the Battersea Training College, "it was notorious that after years of instruction in the Bible and Catechism large numbers of children lapsed into Dissent or utter godlessness." It is hardly honourable in the face of a mass of statements of this kind to charge us with wishing to found heathen schools, when we only desire to take the religious instruction out of the hands of lay teachers who have, to such a degree as this, demonstrated their unfitness to impart it.

The fear of the proselytising effect of the religious hour is a secondary thing, and there is a fine contemptuousness in the common indifference among Dissenting parents about withdrawing their children from it. The Welsh poor are nearly all Dissenters, yet they suffer their children to learn the Catechism, and gravely to declare that they have been made children of grace through baptism, though they have never been baptized, and that their godfathers and godmothers have vowed divers fine things in their names, though they have never known the blessing of godfathers and godmothers at all. Surely we are the religious party, who seek to put a stop to ghastly mummeries like this. What moves the indignation of sensible and patriotic observers is that these men who provide a slovenly and wretched religious instruction

and a slovenly and wretched secular instruction, and who are fully aware from their own reports how ill they are doing the work they have undertaken, yet obstinately cling to a function which they are found incompetent to perform, and stubbornly refuse to stand aside to give a chance to fresh principles and new forces and untried agencies, which may perhaps perform the work as ill, but which at least cannot possibly perform it worse. And mark that these are the men, this great Church-party, who uniformly bid us rely upon improved education as the one panacea for the backwardness of our humbler population. When we ask them how to deal with the drunkenness that is the arch-curse of the land, they cry, Educate the people. We point to our million of paupers, breeding a devouring pauper race to come after them: education is declared the one cure, the single assured remedy. We pray them to consider the problem of a wage-earning class acquiring a new measure of material prosperity which they know no more how to use in a wise, sober, and civilized way than their suddenly enriched betters know how to use it so. They reply, We have considered your problem, we solve it by education. We inquire of them whether it is not pitiable to think of the brutalising lives that are led by the rural and urban poor in their crowded hovels, with no hope nor interest nor outlook for themselves or their descendants. They answer, Yes, it is pitiable; you must educate. Can you believe, we ask, that any nation is great and stable or will hold a foremost

place in the civilized system, with huge classes of its members sunk in the degradation of the lower English labourers? Ah, they say, you must open the mind and heart, you must discipline the intelligence and train the affections. And then they press on with a headlong enthusiasm to employ badly-taught teachers to discipline the intelligence up to the superb attainments of the Third Standard, and to train the affections by a few bits of the Church Catechism "neither accurately learned nor intelligently understood"!

It is barely credible that men who thus obstruct all other social reforms by a parrot's repetition about the necessity of education, are most persistent in obstructing all reforms in education itself. They substitute education for every other kind of improvement, and then for education they substitute those paltry scraps of instruction, whether secular or religious, of which low standards and inspectors' rebukes tell the sorry tale, and which no more deserve the name of education than a savage scratching a little patch of ground with a stick or the shoulder-blade of a beast deserves to be called a scientific agriculturist.

X.

In the preceding pages we have seen how Mr. Forster's Act and his administration of its provisions give a direct subsidy from the public purse to the clergy of the Church of England and the priests of the Church of Rome. We have seen that the sectarian system of education means new power and

more public money for the two great hierarchies of obscurantism. We have seen the religious difficulty to be exaggerated and factitious, and that the same separation in the person of the instructor which is already conceded in the time of the instruction, furnishes the only just and tolerant solution. Let the school be the property of a board of public representatives; let the teacher be confined to secular instruction, just as he now is most rigidly so confined for five-sixths of the working day; then let the clergyman, the priest, or anyone else, where the ratepayers wish it, come in and give the religious instruction in the time which is already set apart for it in the time-table.

If the religious difficulty arose from sincere religious conviction, it would be completely met by this simple change in school administration. Candidates for parliament tell us they are against any scheme that will separate religious from secular instruction. They really talk nonsense. The separation has already been definitely settled by the Conscience Clause, which insists on the religious instruction being strictly confined to a certain time at the beginning or end of the day's work, and punishes any attempt to evade this separation by withdrawal of the grant. All we ask is that, for the sake of avoiding everlasting feud, in the first place, and for the sake of leaving the teacher free for his own proper business in the second, this separation should be extended from the time at which it is given, to the person who gives it. Whoever after this accuses us of driving the Bible out of the schools,

of hindering religion, of forcing godless knowledge on the people, must either be too stupid to understand the meaning of the existing Conscience Clause, or else he is a deliberate calumniator, willing to use any word that serves his turn. And whoever declines to accept this compromise must do so, because he is thinking of other ends than the religious nurture and admonition of the children.

We saw from the words of denominational inspectors that what is called religious instruction is avowedly a miserable failure, so that the sectarian schools do ill even the kind of work for which they are especially cherished. It is not merely because the system is sectarian and involves dogmatic instruction that the present writer, at any rate, would gladly see it extinguished as rapidly as may be, and replaced by a system which will certainly be more costly, but which would at least have the merit of giving us a substantial return on our outlay. Our contention is that at present we are paying increasingly large sums of money to sectarian schools, and that these schools do not and cannot, so long as they remain under the control of sectarian authorities, perform the work for which they are paid, and for which their managers and champions take most extravagant credit.

Here, then, is the true education question, not merely in the honourable struggle of the dissenters for justice, nor in the base struggle of the Anglican sects for supremacy. To what abject proportions do these sectarian pretensions shrink as we realise the

depths of the abyss of ignorance in which the masses of our people lie sunken. If the church schools or the catholic schools could pass two hundred thousand children a year in the Sixth Standard, then one might be willing to shut his eyes to the injustice of paying for them out of the pockets of those who are neither churchmen nor catholics. We might be willing to run the risk of strengthening ecclesiasticism and spreading superstition, being well assured that an instructed people will know better than any other how to deal with these and all other pestilent social growths. But the denominational system not only cannot pass two hundred thousand children in the Sixth Standard, it cannot even *present* sixteen thousand, and cannot pass nine thousand! We have a policy of injustice unredeemed and of retrogression without recompense. You give new props to the established sects at the cost of the whole nation, you exclude the public from the administration of their own funds, you discourage lay participation in school management, you fill the country with strife and dissension, and yet after all this violation alike of principle and policy you cannot justify yourselves by educational success, or give us a single new guarantee that the children shall be turned out of the schools less ignorant than the majority of them are turned out now.

In 1867 we learnt on the authority of one of the ablest men who have ever filled the office of inspector, that nearly 90 per cent. of the scholars were leaving the primary schools destitute of that rudimentary

knowledge without which all teaching of science, even if it were offered to them, would be unintelligible. This is the state of things which the vaunted denominational system has left us, and it is a state of things which that system is essentially incompetent to reform. What is there to make the schools give any better instruction now than they did in 1867? The gratuitous and unexpected increase in the grants by fifty per cent. is a most substantial encouragement to the managers not to take too much trouble in reaching the highest standards. It is a direct weakening of the incentives to earn more money by procuring a greater number of pupils and a greater number of good passes. What was there in the Education Act to give managers a motive for paying more attention to those extra subjects which are in truth the part of instruction that gives most life and significance to the rest? Half of the inspectors complain that these subjects are indifferently regarded, and one or two of them distinctly assert the reason of this to be that the managers have seldom or ever any pecuniary interest in their result.¹

Again, even the very cessation of religious inspection is not unlikely in many cases to have the effect of injuring the secular instruction, and in this way. The Government inspector has now been replaced so far as religious examination is concerned by a Diocesan Inspector, whose salary is provided by voluntary contributions, and the acceptance or refusal

¹ Mr. Kennedy's Report, p. 101.

of whose services is, of course, at the choice of the school managers. What happens? We find advertisements for masters, informing them that they will receive additions to their salary if the Diocesan Inspector's report is satisfactory. What is this but to bribe the master to postpone useful secular instruction to instruction in the Catechism? A certificated mistress who is a good witness because she would apparently on no account wish to see religious instruction taken out of her hands, writes thus: "Since the Education Act became law, it has been a most difficult matter to keep strict faith with the Government, and at the same time in Church schools to satisfy the requirements of the Diocesan Inspector."¹ With a competition of this sort going on, we may be quite sure that, whatever else may happen, at least there will be no rise in the secular standards reached by this correspondent's pupils. The teachers are no doubt delighted in their hearts by the Time-table Conscience Clause. That at any rate makes some four solid hours a day secure against the hymn-singing and other interruptions to serious business, in which clerical managers and manageresses used to rejoice. But, this gain notwithstanding, so long as the school "belongs to" the clergyman—though the parents and the tax-payers may pay four-fifths or five-sixths, or even four hundred and fifty-eight four hundred and fifty-ninths of its cost¹—for so long the

¹ Letter to the *Times*, September 5, 1873.

² See above, p. 52.

dependent teacher will inevitably be tempted to give his best mind to what pleases his employer best.

What again has the Act done in the all-important matter of improving the capacity and position of the teacher? Absolutely nothing. The increased grants might be supposed to go to increase the teacher's salary, and so by-and-by be the means of introducing a more highly educated class of men and women into the profession. It is notorious that nothing of the kind happens. The increase can only serve to relieve the private subscribers, and thus render the schools even less worthy of the name of voluntary than they were before. One of the inspectors distinctly remarks "the increasing tendency among managers of schools to free themselves from pecuniary responsibility by allowing teachers to take the whole of the pence and a considerable portion of the capitation grant as part of their salaries; in some instances they practically farm their schools."¹

And how has the Act lessened the burden of those irrelevant drudgeries which are inseparable from a system that makes the schools an appendage to the church and the parsonage, and which rob the master at once of his needful leisure and his lawful independence? The same correspondent from whom I have already quoted says: "It is untrue that the majority of teachers have no Sunday duties: in nearly all country schools the Sunday-school rests almost entirely on the teachers. They are also often required to play an organ or a

¹ Mr. Blandford's Report for 1872, p. 35.

harmonium, and to train the choir.”¹ So long as the Church remains in possession of the schools, this fatal drawback to the character of the teaching profession is certain to remain. Again, it is perfectly assured in the opinion of the most competent judges and those who see the working of the schools most closely, that compulsory provisions, probably in various forms direct and indirect, reaching parent and employer, are indispensable to check, even if they prove unable to put an end to, that irregularity of attendance, that frequent absence from school on frivolous pretexts, which is one of the chief secrets of the low standards. Well, for this the statesmen who claim so loudly to have reared a national system of education, have done the least possible, with their rickety framework of permissive boards and permissive compulsion. Preston, for example, with a population of some 90,000, and where the average school attendance falls short of what it ought to be by 4,000, has no board and no compulsion, though its neighbour Blackburn has both, with excellent results. Birkenhead, a still larger borough, has no board. Of the whole population of England and Wales, only 39 per cent. are under the rule of compulsory attendance.

Finally, next to irregularity of attendance as a cause of the inefficiency of our system, comes the insufficiency of the school age. In most parts of Germany the limits of school age are from 6 or 7 to 14, in Switzerland from 6 to 14 or 15, while in Saxony a

¹ See Mr. J. Storr's letter to the same effect, *Times*, September 11.

child at work is a half-timer up to 16. With us a half-timer is a child between 8 and 13, and 13 is the limit prescribed for compulsion by the Education Act. More time is an indispensable condition of anything like a solid education, and children must be made to stay later as well as come in earlier, for in this mere than anything else it is the ending that crowns the work. Here, then, we are left, and seem likely to be left, just where we were.

XI.

People console themselves for the failure of the Act of 1870, and for the indifference shown by many of the constituencies to the momentous national interests which that Act has for the time sacrificed, by the comfortable reflection that England was great and strong before primary instruction was ever thought of, and that therefore she may well continue to be great and strong even though primary instruction should remain the poor and inadequate thing which it now is. Decidedly there are circumstances in which a rude and elemental vigour may stand a people in a thousand times better stead than the most widespread culture. But are these circumstances ours? Will rude vigour, undisciplined by intellectual training, undirected by intellectual skill, uninformed by knowledge, suffice for England in the conditions of modern society? Let two considerations dispel this fallacy of indolent complacency for ever. First, have we not to compete now, with a degree of intensity not dreamed of fifty

years ago and only half realised even at this very day, with Germany and the United States, whose systems may abound in imperfections of detail, but are at least not so absolutely illusory as to turn out the majority of their workers in the numb ignorance of an English boy to whom the Third Standard is an impassable bridge? We have to compete with these populations, too, under conditions which place the uninstructed workman at a growing disadvantage. It is true that some of our greatest mechanical inventors have been illiterate, but to make this an argument against education is as childish as to bring forward the cases of men like Marlborough, Clive, Nelson, against scientific military training. A man with inventive genius will work miracles in spite of his literary ignorance, but the average workman does not work miracles: and a miracle it would be if a set of men who had passed through the effective school training of Prussia did not in the long-run outstrip in dexterity, quickness of apprehension, readiness of adaptation, a set of men who had tried to learn reading and writing and had failed, as is the case with the majority of the English labouring class.

Observe that this position is quite independent of any controversy as to the curative effects of teaching, and any question whether there is the least "connection between learning that certain clusters of marks on paper stand for certain words and the getting a higher sense of duty." This high matter does not now concern us, nor shall we exercise ourselves in it.

The clusters of marks on paper do at any rate constitute the chief instrument in many of the most important practical arts, and not to be able to read nor to work sums nor to draw lines is to miss the use of this instrument, and to be condemned to the lowest place in the least important practical arts. I am far from wishing to press the advantages of instruction over mother-wit further than they will bear, but these advantages will certainly be more powerful in proportion as brute labour becomes less valuable, as machines grow more delicate and complex, as inventions multiply, as more and more has to be acquired from books, as new processes decide victory in this or that department of manufacture, and financial exactitude, foresight, and science, exert increasing influence over commerce. England has a long start in the competition. Is it not exasperating to see her losing the untold advantages which would come from an efficient training of her people, simply in order that the clergy may have a barely controlled mastery in the schools,—a fruitless mastery, moreover, which they do not use even so far as to give the children effective instruction in their own Bible and their own Catechism.

. Our kinsmen in Australia might, one would suppose, be content to trust to rude elemental vigour if any set of men in the world ever could. Yet they find that they cannot. Experience of the disadvantages of brute ignorance in an age of cultivated skill has been too strong for fallacies of *à priori*. The people of Victoria had to fight the battle which we are fight-

ing. So long as education was no more than a name for a quarrel among sects, they could get nothing done. Therefore, as a sensible community was likely to do, and as we shall be driven by the irresistible pressure of circumstances before many more years to do, they have taken the function of controlling primary instruction into their own hands, thrown a handful of dust over the raging insects, released the clergy and the teachers each from the business that belongs to the other, compelled every child between the ages of six and fifteen to attend school until it is able to pass a certain examination, and have fully established that system of compulsory, free, and secular instruction which they felt to be neither more nor less than indispensable to the welfare of their society.

Secondly, in our complacent trust in rude vigour as a substitute for trained intelligence, we forget that these ignorant multitudes are now what they never were before, the political masters of the realm. So far, the old social organization has neutralised the new distribution of power. Household suffrage as yet is only a thing on paper. We have still to feel its reality. The new possessors of power are still hardly aware that it is theirs. And who are the new possessors of power? The skilled artisans, the leaders of trade societies, and the like? Alas, no; it is not they but those below them, those between the artisan and the pauper, whenever they choose to awake, or whenever they choose in their dreams to let

somebody else lead them, who hold the destinies of our society in their hands. "If I have twenty-one men in my bar on the day of polling," a respectable publican is reported to have said, "I can make sure of twenty votes by distributing twenty pints of fourpenny: I have done it and can do it at any time." You may say that this is an exception, an accident, an exaggeration. It may be so, but what is neither exception nor accident nor exaggeration is the bald fact that of "four-fifths of the scholars who leave school in a given year either no account at all or a very unsatisfactory one is given by an examination of the most strictly elementary kind." In plain English, a majority of those who come out of the schools cannot read a newspaper. This unfortunate class is our ruling class. Their votes can carry elections, change administrations, decide policies. As yet they have no initiative, and it may be some time before they cease to follow the initiative of others. When their time comes and a leader, they will make terribly short work with a good deal that you hold precious now. Journalists gird at three or four writers who press for public consideration, while there is yet time, some of the questions connected with the tenure of land, with taxation, with endowments, above all with education. The sophists of the newspaper press are so busily fighting momentous practical issues with the lath and sword of some little abstract theory, that they have no eyes for the gulf which is ready to open at the feet of them and the institutions which they so absurdly

suppose themselves to be defending. The prospect of a Beer parliament has no terrors for blind politicians of this stamp. They do not discern that the same classes who are now believed to be on the point of following the publicans and the clergy to the polls, to the strangely compounded cry of an open Bible and a flowing barrel, are one day very likely to invent cries of their own that will bring destruction where the abused reformer of to-day only seeks improvement, and, where we only seek to amend, will trample, efface, obliterate.

The Englishman is inclined to be law-abiding and fair, no doubt, within limits. But since the Reform Act of 1867 the power of making the laws by which all have to abide is going to the class that cannot read a newspaper, and that with our present educational system is not likely to be able to read a newspaper. Political infatuation seems to reach its climax when those who have most to gain by our having an intelligent and instructed people, decline to discuss the question how the people are to be made so, or whether the present system can ever lead to so indispensable a result; and instead of keeping the subject constantly before their eyes in all its magnitude and all the fulness of its importance to the national well-being, make no worthier contribution to the greatest of public interests than puny railing against the League and irrelevant gibing at Dissenters. Let dissent be annihilated; will that prevent the majority of your children from coming out of your

schools below the Fourth Standard? Let the League perish; will that educate your masters?

Yet, no; this is not the climax of political infatuation. Something remains that to those of another time will seem more incredible still. The statesmen who decline to give us a national system of education are the very men who have just declared for household suffrage in the counties. They are going to add to the constituencies many thousands of voters from the very class for whose instruction in the elements of knowledge they will not even enforce those compulsory provisions which are thought indispensable for the large towns. They are supposed to be going to the country with the cry of more rural voters, but no rural School-boards and no rural compulsion. Could recklessness go further? Household franchise in the counties by all means, if it be accompanied by School-boards and the machinery of compulsory attendance; but to go on in this headlong course of "leaps in the dark," of giving power without training intelligence, of multiplying electors without improving schools, of making men vote without making them learn how to read, is a policy from which the most desperate of the ministers who preceded the first Revolution in France might have shrunk, and which the most insensate anarchist of the International might welcome as the surest promise that he shall one day secure the chance for which he is waiting. In France, it is true, the peasants are believed always to use their political power in favour of order and the

existing government, and their peasants are as ignorant as ours. But they have the education of property or the reasonable hopes of property. They have something to lose by disorder. What has our peasant to lose by disorder, and how can society do less for him than it does now? Take the United States again. The most vehement lovers of democracy in America still look with amazement at the spectacle of statesmen hurrying us on to a régime of universal suffrage without instructing the people who are to exercise it. They tell us that their political system could not last half a century without their schools. It is as much as ever they can do, or perhaps more, to make headway against the floods of ignorance which throw themselves every year on to their shores from our side of the Atlantic. The latest notion of policy in England is to entrust the great ship of our state to the floods of ignorance that are left behind; and new generations of rural voters are to grow up without any really effective provision that they shall any more know how to read than their fathers did, lest such provisions should wound the fine susceptibilities of an order of men who, under the pretext that secular instruction without religious is full of peril, are suffered to maintain a sham system that gives the public illusory secular instruction and a religious instruction more illusory still.

Nearly every Inspector agrees that without compulsion you can do nothing. Yet the machinery of compulsion is systematically discouraged. Let us

look at the state of things in a typical rural district, the counties of Bedford and Huntingdon. Of 219 parishes, 82 were found supplied with efficient schools, 34 from their small size or neighbourhood to other schools requiring no supply, 39 imperfectly supplied, and 64, *though requiring it, with no supply at all*; “thus giving as a result an educational provision that falls short by nearly one half of what is required.” That is the least part of the matter, because new schools can be built. But in the schools already at work, not even reading has been carefully taught. “The three elementary subjects appear to have been taught with the simple view of enabling the children to scrape through the examination, and not with the object of attaining any excellence. . . . A teacher cultivates the memory but not the intelligence of his children; if they can pronounce a word, it matters little whether they know its meaning. . . . Many parishes have been returned, as having sufficient education, though in reality the character of their education is of an exceedingly low kind.”¹ This all really means that the bulk of the children cannot read even if they have been to the schools. Yet to these poor souls we are going to confide the destinies of an empire.

XII.

“We must repeat again and again that in our struggle for national instruction there is not the least desire to exaggerate the value of even the best

¹ Mr. Johnstone's Report.

instruction which the bulk of a vast population like ours is ever likely to receive. No one now pretends that ability to read and write is any assurance of honesty or manual skill or sobriety. No one pretends that the provision of elementary instruction absolves the legislature from all further attention to evils which are within the reach of legislation, and are as hostile to the common weal as the prevailing ignorance. Skill in reading and counting will not protect its possessor against the mischief that is wrought by overcrowding, by exhausting labour in childhood and youth, by unbounded temptations to get drunk, by inveterate traditions and class habits of self-indulgence. But it will give the man a better chance. Reading furnishes him with the instrument by which he may know how the world fares outside his narrow penfold. Writing and counting enable him to manage his own small affairs with order and confidence. We make no transcendental claims for primary instruction and what it can do. The influence of its effective diffusion would always have to be expressed in very homely terms. But these homely terms cover large spaces in the art of more orderly living.

If an English peasant, for instance, knew how to read and count as a Scotch or an American peasant does, he would have a chance of finding out the monstrous percentage which the village shopkeeper makes him pay, and will continue to make him pay, until the victim has arithmetic enough, and can get

from the papers knowledge enough of wholesale prices, to let him see the cost in hardly-earned cash of his present ignorance of his letters. "The wages of the agricultural labourer are positively frittered away to almost nothing by the way in which he is well-nigh obliged to spend them," says one who knows well what he is speaking about. "Unable in consequence of his small earnings and unthrifty habits to have enough in hand to make his purchases on any day but pay day; paid often too late on that day to leave him time to go to the distant market-town, or obliged by debt incurred during sickness or bad weather to deal at one village shop, often without even daring to question the fairness of the price or the quality of the article; and having no duplicate of the book in which his purchases are entered, the poor fellow is constrained to spend his scanty earnings, bound hand and foot, so to speak, and of course suffers in proportion. Whenever a co-operative store has been set up on sound principles, and has been well managed by the labouring classes, it has not only enabled them to buy all they want, whether in food or clothing, at wholesale price and of the best quality, and so made every shilling worth a shilling, but—which is still more important—has generated in them habits of thrift, foresight, and independence; taught them the real value of money, and rescued them from debt and the public-house."¹

How is the man to be a co-operator, to watch

¹ Canon Girdlestone.

accounts, to supervise transactions, when he left school at the age of ten in the Second Standard, and at the age of five and twenty could no more cast up a money column or calculate a percentage than he could solve a cubic equation? Let the reader with an income from the funds imagine how much less it would be worth to him, if he could neither read nor compute, could neither check the weekly bills, nor compare their prices with those of the wholesale market, nor change the tradesmen; let him realise how much familiarity with the art of reckoning, and the practice of putting money into black and white have to do with thrift and good house-keeping; and then let him try to calculate the loss to the poor of never having acquired this familiarity and practice.

Again, we are always chiding the labourer for not saving, and reproaching him for the constant break-down of his clubs and benefit societies. What club or benefit society would not break down, when most of its members are incompetent to supervise their own club accounts or accurately watch the management of the club affairs? To have just scraped through in the Third Standard ten or eleven years back will do nothing to help a man here, and the result is that in most cases the village club is managed by the village publican, with break-down for a consequence. It is quite true that even if all the children in the village had passed in the Fourth Standard, a great many of them would possibly lose much of their habit and facility by the time of manhood. But some of

them would not lose it ; the stronger and more alert people would preserve it ; and there would be enough of them in most villages to keep the club affairs in good order and to set a tolerably efficient example of management to their weaker mates, for are not the strong and alert always a minority, and is it not one of the main objects of social activity to give the strong and alert the best possible chance of using their strength for the common good ?

While, therefore, wholly repudiating the extravagant expectations of large classes of people, that mere spread of knowledge will transform the whole face of society, we contend that such an improved capacity of taking care of their own affairs as I have just described would be a most substantial social gain. It would be a most substantial gain if our labouring class in England could all talk as articulately, as rationally, and as instructedly, and could take care of their interests as acutely, as you may trust the labouring class in Scotland to do.

It may be urged that the Scotch training is penetrated with theology, and is biblical and dogmatic in the highest degree. Very likely it is. That is no answer to those who think with me that though education without theology is better, yet education with theology is better than helpless and sodden ignorance. The Scotch denominationalists at least do their work well. The people in England who fatigue us by their artificial cry for an open Bible—which nobody wishes to shut—effectually hinder what they profess to desire,

for a considerable proportion of those who come out of the schools find reading so hard that they never open the Bible or any other book from year's end to year's end, while a further considerable proportion of our children do not even go to the schools at all, nor will ever be legally compelled to go, if the clergy can help it, and are therefore effectually robbed of any chance of reading either the Bible or anything else.

It is not, then, I repeat, any educational fanaticism, any mere superstition as to the worth of instruction, which underlies our conviction of the supreme necessity for such measures as universal and compulsory instruction. We do not say that improved primary instruction will work miracles, that it will purify the drains, or deodorize refuse, or extinguish thirst for beer, or breed industry, or prevent overcrowding, or prevent the moral depravation that comes from overcrowding. On the other hand it is just as unreasonable to disparage "the learning that certain clusters of marks on paper stand for certain words," as it would have been in duelling days to disparage the art of fencing, and as it would be now to laugh at men for working hard to obtain so many more gold and silver counters for their year's labour. Gold and silver counters do not feed you, nor make the body warm; and sensible men covet them, not for themselves, but for the sake of that to which they give access. And so the marks on paper happen to be the instrument of some of the most serious transactions in life. To have perfect mastery over the marks is an

indispensable condition of understanding these transactions, or taking a rational part in them, or simplifying them; and to be in a modern society without this mastery of them is like being in the market-place without money. When a distinguished philosopher lectures us for our struggle after "superficial intellectualization," it is not disrespectful, I hope, to say that he recalls one of those rich men who acquire a great fortune, and then like to stand with their backs to the fire, telling some poverty-stricken hearer how little it is that money can do for a man, and what supreme vanity is the laying up of much goods.

"Few, I suppose, will deliberately assert," Mr. Spencer says, "that information is important and character unimportant." But surely this antithesis is as unreal as Dr. Magee's opposition between freedom and sobriety. The possession of information is an element in character, and therefore shares the importance of character. "What effect will be produced on character by artificial appliances for spreading knowledge is not asked. Of the ends to be kept in view by the legislator, all are unimportant compared with the end of character-making, and yet character-making is an end wholly unrecognised." There is a measure of truth in this, no doubt, and as I pointed out in a previous passage, there has been a strong disposition in many quarters to make "improved education a panacea for all the evils of our present stage of social development, which it is not nor ever can be. But we may be very much in earnest for the spread of instruction,

without falling into any delusion of this kind. Knowledge is not character, and information is not a rightly fashioned will. Has any advocate of national instruction ever asserted the contrary? And to accuse us of not asking what effect will be produced on character by artificial appliances for spreading knowledge, is to overlook the most prominent motives of those who have tried to stir public feeling in this matter. The whole contention of this party has its root in a conviction that the faculty of using the instruments of knowledge is capable of producing a very marked and distinct effect upon character. The present writer at any rate lays very little stress on the probability of wider instruction being sufficient to lead to a large decrease of crime, and its effect upon the minor morals may very possibly prove extremely slight, indirect, and distant.¹ The nation will have to do a great many other things for itself, as well as provide good schools, before any great general advance is made in these respects.

Although, however, effective instruction does not cover nor touch the whole field of character and conduct, it does most manifestly touch some portions of

¹ It is, however, well worth noting that M. Duruy, late Minister of Instruction in France, reported that the effect of the national system of education in Switzerland had been to empty the gaols. In Baden, prisoners decreased from 1,426 in 1854, to 691 in 1861. In Germany crime decreased 30 per cent. in twenty-five years. But we must remember that other social changes co-operated in this reduction of crime. Of our own criminals ninety-six per cent. are illiterate; and one cannot help contrasting Switzerland, which spends seven times as much on education as on pauperism and crime, with England, which spends five times as much on pauperism and crime as upon education. •

it. It adds, for instance, to the consciousness of power and faculty, and this increases the invaluable and far-reaching quality of self-respect. Hence even if a great effort to provide our people with the instruments of knowledge did not reduce the number of criminals, it would still improve the tone of those who are not criminals. In a rude age a man may respect himself perfectly, however illiterate he may be ; but in an age where so much of the business of the world is transacted by writing, and so much more of the business of the world is recorded by writing, and can only be understood, judged, and utilised by those who can read, then a man or a woman who is expected to take a part in this business, and yet is debarred by ignorance from taking an independent part, and is obliged to trust wholly to the representations of luckier people, like the blind or like one groping his way in darkness, such a one is constantly vexed by shame and humiliation ; not merely ought to feel shame, observe, but actually does feel it, as anybody knows who has ever seen adult pupils in a rural night-school or the evening classes in a town institute. Here, then, is one way in which instruction does directly affect character.

And indirectly what consequences to character follow from that power of participating in national or parochial or club affairs, which can never be more than nominal for one to whom the instruments of knowledge are either a mystery wholly unfathomable, or at best an art once distantly approached and now

daily fading away from numbed memories. And mastery of these instruments can only be acquired in youth, before the necessity of bread-winning engrosses the day, and while the faculties are still fresh and moderately unclouded. Hence the obvious fallaciousness of a theory which insists on our being content with "keeping men subordinate to the requirements of orderly social life—letting them suffer the inevitable penalties of breaking these requirements." Letting *them* suffer! As if it were the parent only, and not the child, who suffers from the latter being left unprovided with instruction during the only years in which he has any real chance of acquiring it.

XIII.

There is no necessity to prolong this digression into the region of first principles. The social advantages of having an instructed people, a people equipped with the means of acquiring knowledge, are now so generally admitted in theory, as not to need serious defence against those who do most to retard them in practice. The clergy even nominally concede that it is better to know how to read and write than not, and Conservatives like Mr. Forster and Sir John Pakington tell us that they are in favour of compulsory attendance. The task which we have to achieve is to turn this nominal belief into a reality, to transform an illusory system into an effective force. Let any reader weigh the arguments for instruction which have been suggested in the preceding section,

and which have been worked out with all their force in a hundred places since the education controversy first began ; let him consider that we are living under circumstances in which trained intelligence is growing every day a more indispensable condition of success, and in which our competitors are laying themselves out with a steady care to give this trained intelligence to their people ; let him remember that the great mass of ignorant householders in the towns now possess the franchise, and that in a short time it will certainly be possessed by the yet more ignorant householders in the country ; and then in fine let him observe that the English system of securing for the children of the poor the knowledge of which we are all saying such fine things is the wretched slovenly makeshift we see. We let any little self-selected knot of people who choose to take the business in hand set up a school at a small outlay ; then we let them take the expenses of the school to the extent of four-fifths, or more, out of the pockets of the taxpayer, the ratepayer, and the parents, themselves only paying the remaining fraction. They make the school the stronghold of what theological system they choose. The state has really a comparatively small voice in its administration. The parent has no voice at all—the same parent, mark, for whose conscience, for whose rights, for whose feelings, for whose opinions, the clerical party are so unspeakably solicitous on paper. Public opinion is not invited as to the system of administration, and would not be listened to if it offered itself. The place, in short,

has not a single quality of a national establishment about it. And yet the existence of such an institution as this, unless the instruction fall under a mark so low as hardly to be capable of being missed, prevents the establishment in that place of an effective system of municipal supervision and control, and prevents the power of compelling the attendance of the very children whom it is most desirable to bring in. In short, we permit the clergy and their patrons to bribe us with a fraction of voluntary subscription to allow them to prevent a certain number of children from being well instructed, and a certain other number from being instructed at all. We sell the chances of the young for the thirty or more pieces of silver of the system which is absurdly called voluntary.

There is no more unworthily saved money in our whole administration than the very moderate sum which voluntary subscriptions are the means of sparing to the ratepayer, because, in order to save ourselves from having to pay that fraction, we sacrifice the efficiency of the returns on the money which we do actually pay. Let us notice what the sacrifice of the voluntary contributions would really come to. In the year 1872 the total amount of the voluntary subscriptions to the maintenance of the public elementary schools under inspection was £570,975.

This may seem a considerable sum, but let us look at it in its true light. To measure its real weight, we may reflect that, if Mr. Goschen's Report on Local Taxation is to be relied on, *this sum amounts to about*

one penny in the pound on the rateable value of property subject to local taxation. The sum is in fact a substitute for a rate. Nay, a small portion of it actually is the product of a rate,—namely, that impudent device called a voluntary rate, which is levied by some private individual who tells people how much cheaper this will be, though he does not tell them that the result will be worthless; or else it is levied by a rural vestry under the direction of a clergyman, who has previously warned his flock how onerous would be a school-rate levied by a board, though it would not really exceed the voluntary exaction which he himself proposes to them, and who, moreover, after he has got his own voluntary rate safely levied and collected, is perpetually assuring us that the parish would never stand an education rate.

Well, this farce accounts for part of the money, which though not a very important part, is likely to increase. The whole is subscribed by 253,296 contributories, who, therefore, on an average give something more than two pounds a-piece. Now, of this quarter of a million of people some no doubt also pay a school-rate, but we know that the larger part of the sum comes from districts in which there is no school-rate. The voluntary contribution in such cases is paid instead of a rate. The amount of the voluntary subscriptions, therefore, is not the measure of the sacrifice of the subscribers, because if they did not give the money, they would still have to pay it in another shape. A great many country gentlemen are

at this moment taking credit for liberality, when they are in truth subscribing less money than a fair rate would take out of their pockets. Instead of welcoming this kind of substitution, it would be sounder policy to repulse it. An insufficient sum of money is raised, preventing resort to methods which would raise a sufficient sum. It is raised unequally, exonerating hundreds even of the subscribers from the duty of contributing as much to the provision of education as is paid by everybody in a school-rated district, and exonerating all those who are not subscribers from the necessity of contributing anything at all, beyond their share in the Queen's taxes, to this national duty. For instance, in one case cited in the last Blue-book, where a voluntary rate was introduced in order to avoid a board, we learn that "while some paid more than their rates, many escaped; among these, the guardians of the poor, the directors of Parkhurst prison, the water, gas, and railway companies, the Priory of St. Dominic, a few of the small farmers, and six or eight gentlemen."¹ Why should the gas, water, and railway companies, and the six or eight gentlemen, evade this any more than other just local charges?

We contend that if every man of this quarter of a million of subscribers could be by any means induced to keep his two pounds in his pocket, it would be the very best thing that could happen to us. We should then have without further ado to introduce School-

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¹ Page 207.

boards all over the country, which would raise a far more adequate sum without adding a farthing to the charges of those who are now even moderately liberal, and without placing any serious burden on those who now contrive almost wholly to escape from what is practically recognised by the legislature to be as proper a local charge as police, poor, and highways.

As for the alleged impracticability of any scheme which depends on the good-will of farmers and people like them, this is the kind of despondent cry which greets the reform of every abuse. We are always told that the improved system will never work, and that every village in 'England' will resist education, the moment after it is taken from the clergyman's hands. This again is a mere paper argument, invented by the country clergy and accepted without investigation by journalists who live in London. Take the Inspector's account of the feeling about education in two of the most purely agricultural counties in England. "There have been grumblings at increased expense, and complaints that when the buildings are erected children will not be found to fill them, but out of the 219 parishes within my district only two have made appeal against what is proposed to be required of them. The necessity and even the propriety of what has been asked has been generally recognised, and this is saying a great deal for counties in which the large predominance of the farmer class might have argued obstinate hostility to the spread of

education.”¹ It would be the same everywhere else. Let the legislature and the Education Department settle what Boards have to do, and then no one seriously doubts that an elective body of ratepayers appointed *ad hoc* will discharge their duties with a perfectly satisfactory amount of loyalty. If Boards have not yet fully answered the expectations of their friends in every case, one main cause has been in the ineptitude of the Act, which not only expressly threw down the bone of religious contention among them, but also hindered their efficiency by leaving to them the decision of a number of grave matters which ought to have been settled for them by the imperial legislature.

Ah, we are told, if ever the voluntaryist (so-called) friends of denominational education are discouraged and snubbed, it would be hopeless to “supply their place in philanthropic zeal and earnest effort.” This is mere talking. First, philanthropic zeal and earnest effort, however much we may respect the men and women by whom they were exhibited, have been proved utterly and absolutely inadequate to the great work to which they were devoted. We have no choice about supplying their place. It must be supplied, and this is just what the whole agitation means.

Second, it is above all things desirable to remove the task of national instruction as far away as possible from the region of philanthropy, into the drier climate

¹ Mr. Johnstone's Report, p. 95.

of business and public duty. Of philanthropy which takes the form of sectarian supremacy for one thing, and bad instruction for another, we have had more than enough. The managers of schools are the administrators of a large sum of the public money, and as one of the inspectors remarks, we have "a right to expect that gentlemen who undertake the responsible office of manager would take pains to ascertain that all the conditions under which public money is paid are fulfilled."¹ Do they take such pains? On the contrary, there is hardly one single Report for the last year which does not contain bitter complaints of the carelessness with which the school registers are habitually kept, though public money is paid in reliance on their accurate marking of attendances. A manager has no more obvious duty than the supervision of these registers, and yet this is the way in which it is performed. "Sometimes," writes another inspector, "I find by the log-book that not one of the managers has visited the school from year's end to year's end; their duties have begun and ended with signing the papers at the time of inspection, and there has probably been some difficulty in procuring from them the performance of even that duty."²

¹ Mr. Smith's Report, p. 127.

² Mr. Perez's Report, p. 115. Here is one more extract from the Report on the District of South Yorkshire: "In a few cases there has been positive dishonesty in the teachers, deliberate tampering with the returns, alteration of figures to a great extent, clever manipulation of imperfect entries, &c.. In a great many cases there has been much carelessness in keeping the registers; they have either been entrusted entirely to the apprentices without any regular or careful supervision. . . . so that very many, some very important,

Once more, the provision and control of education are matters of business, not of philanthropy.

Third, if this philanthropic zeal and earnest effort are really and truly inspired by an honest desire to instruct the people, will it not be something of a prodigy if they are extinguished by a scheme that must assuredly extend this instruction to the most neglected classes, and improve the instruction of those who are not neglected?

And fourthly, will there be no room for zeal and effort on the part of the clergymen or the clerically minded laymen, when we have got Boards? In the United States, if I am not mistaken, no minister of any denomination can be a school trustee. No one proposes such exclusion in this country. The present writer, for one, would warmly oppose any such exclusion. If I were in the House of Commons I should vote against a bill for the exclusion of the clergy from the office of justice of the peace. Disqualification never made anybody better. The best thing that can happen to a clergyman is to have to transact plenty of civil business along with laymen, and the more important the business, the better. To sit on a Board with a Baptist or two, a Wesleyan or two, a man of the world or two belonging to Chesterfield's religion, which was that of every wise man but which no wise man ever told; to have to compromise, to conciliate, to struggle, to submit

mistakes have been found in them. In such cases there was, I believe, no dishonest purpose, but really culpable negligence, leading to grossly inaccurate returns, and involving unfair demands on the public purse."—Mr. Watkins's Report, p. 216.

to defeat, to face facts: why, no better process could be devised for softening clerical manners and hindering them from being fierce. In educating the people we should thus be educating the clergy also, and exactly in those matters where their "educational destitution" is at present most insufferable. " "

The so-called zeal of the clergy for education may perhaps not unfairly be analysed in the following manner:—1. Many of them have fostered schools out of mere fussiness and petty self-consequence. 2. Many of them out of eagerness to rear "bulwarks of the church" and "nurseries of church principles." 3. Many of them from a love of orderliness and good government in a parish. 4. Many of them from a real zeal for the main object of a school, namely the good instruction of the children. As for the first two classes, they will no doubt be discouraged; the more desperate their discouragement, the better for other people. The second two classes are not likely to be at all discouraged by making the schools national; their activity will take a wider and more effective form, that is all. "

The question whether there should be a Board for every parish, or a Board for every union, or a Board for united districts with a population of 2,000 or 3,000, is one of detail.¹ A question of great importance, and one that will require very mature consideration on the part of parliament, but still a question of

¹ See on this question the last Report of the Committee of Council on Education, Part ii. of Appendix, pp. 43—4.

administrative detail. It is enough here to lay down the general principle of the expediency of their universal establishment under one scheme of arrangement or another. There is some probability that, in order to evade this necessity, proposals will be made for giving compulsory powers to justices or perhaps to Boards of Guardians. No proposal ought to be listened to which does not lead to the creation of bodies expressly elected for purposes of school management and for such purposes only, though it might be expedient to have ex-officio members also. The work to be done is special, and needs to be undertaken with a special sense of its high dignity and importance. What we gain by a School-board is shortly this. (1) We transfer the control of a large amount of national expenditure from a private and irresponsible body to a responsible body of representatives chosen by the persons concerned. (2) We gradually diffuse the notion of the school being an object of public care, and the provision of instruction a public duty. This will have in time the double effect of enlisting a constantly greater amount of interest in its success and efficiency on the part of the superintending bodies, and next of inducing the parents to associate the attendance of their children at school with what is right, proper, legally appointed, and usual. (3) Boards would drive out of existence many of the private adventure schools which are so unjustifiably counted among the educational equipments of the country. (4) Without Boards you cannot have the machinery of compulsion, and without

compulsion you cannot touch an immense mass of your people. If compulsory attendance, which of course ought to be settled by the imperial legislature, be supplemented, as will undoubtedly be found expedient, by provisions affecting employers of labour, it would naturally be the business of the Board to see that such provisions should not remain a dead letter.

It is a mistake to suppose that the last of these objects is the only real reason for anxiety to have the control of education given to Boards, properly directed by a central department. The others are equally important, for in them is involved first a great principle of our constitution, and next that unwritten moral influence of legislation to which we have to look in course of time for making all compulsory devices as superfluous in England as they have now become in Prussia. We have to build up a sense of the necessity and desirableness of instruction, until it grows to be an accepted tradition of our people. To take part in such a task may well be the highest aspiration of patriotism. If that timorous and disparaging estimate of public spirit which in some conspicuous politicians passes current for a profound sagacity, should prove to be the right estimate; if the influential and enlightened classes stand aloof from School-boards, and leave their management to the meaner and darker sort, as the clerical partisans are not ashamed to threaten, then will the penalties assuredly fall on the social defaulters, who having received most from the energy and service of the past are ignobly content to

do least for the service of present or future. If the evil that is foretold should come to pass, be it so. Meanwhile, you will perhaps do no ill in borrowing the sentiment of old Rome, who paid most heed and most honour to those counsellors who insisted on not despairing concerning the commonwealth.

XIV.

I shall now pass to another branch of my subject, which only comes last in order because it is that on which public opinion is least informed; I mean the question of Free Schools. Is it expedient in our present state of national ignorance that admission to primary instruction should be gratuitous?

The question is raised to a place among urgent practical problems in consequence of the application of compulsion. When opinion has ripened sufficiently, and the requisite measures have been passed to compel every parent to send his children to some school, we shall then be inevitably confronted by a multitude of practical difficulties which can only be met by making primary instruction gratuitously accessible. Indeed, we have already been confronted by these difficulties, and have already met them by giving free schooling. For what was the Act of last session but a law making primary instruction free for some 200,000 children? What were the Seventeenth and Twenty Fifth clauses of the Act of 1870 but partial applications of a principle which will have to be more widely extended in

proportion as compulsion extends the area over which the children are to be driven into the schools ?

Nor, so far as the principle of gratuitousness goes, are we at issue with the clergy. They are as anxious to extend free instruction as we are, if the country will only let them extend it in their own way. The Twenty Fifth clause is the road to free instruction which finds favour in their eyes, and they are willing to adopt its machinery almost to any extent, so far as they can make sure that free instruction shall only be given in their own denominational schools. In applying this clause, in Salford for instance, their definition of indigence is of the roomiest ; no argument about weakening parental responsibility, or impairing parental self-respect, or lessening the value of instruction in parental eyes, or overburdening the rate-payer, or making the provident pay for the improvident, has a feather's weight, so long as they can appropriate the rates for sectarian schools. It is only when the instruction is to be given in Board schools or secular schools, that all these considerations become formidable in their eyes. However, let us take as much of their alliance as they will concede, and be glad that the clergy at least see no objections to gratuitous instruction in principle, any more than the legislature which passed the Twenty Fifth clause and the Education Act Amendment Act can consistently be supposed to see any.

Mr. Mill stated the case many years ago very clearly. "It is an allowable exercise of the powers of

government," he wrote, "to impose on parents the legal obligation of giving elementary instruction to their children. This, however, cannot fairly be done without taking measures to ensure that such instruction shall be always accessible to them either gratuitously or at a trifling expense." "It may indeed," he continued, "be objected that the education of children is one of those expenses which parents, even of the labouring class, ought to defray; that it is desirable that they should feel it incumbent on them to provide by their own means for the fulfilment of their duties, and that by giving education at the cost of others, just as much as by giving subsistence, the standard of necessary wages is proportionately lowered, and the spring of exertion and self-restraint is so much relaxed. This argument could at best be only valid if the question were that of substituting a public provision for what individuals would otherwise do for themselves; if all parents in the labouring class recognised and practised the duty of giving instruction to their children at their own expense. But inasmuch as parents do not practise this duty, and do not include education among those necessary expenses which their wages must provide for, therefore the general rate of wages is not high enough to bear those expenses, and they must be borne from some other source. And this is not one of the cases in which the tender of help perpetuates the state of things which renders help necessary. Instruction, when it is really such, does not enervate, but strengthens as well as enlarges the

active faculties: in whatever manner acquired, its effect on the mind is favourable to the spirit of independence; and when, unless had gratuitously, it would not be had at all, help in this form has the opposite tendency to that which in so many other cases makes it objectionable; it is help towards doing without help.”¹

Mr. Mill was a thoroughly scientific economist, and therefore he knew the limits of his science. He constantly corrected and qualified the deductions of mere verbal logic by reference to the facts to which they related. Writers who fancy that it must be scientific to push premisses that are strictly conditional to their furthest logical and most unconditional conclusions, actually declare with rigorous gravity that a parent who has his child's fees remitted, “ought” to be publicly declared a pauper. They define pauper to suit their own ridiculous, unsocial, and inhuman notions of the growth and maintenance of a community, and then if the facts do not coincide with the definition, so much the worse for the facts. Let us in the face of these dreary fallacies adhere to Mr. Mill's wiser opinion, that “help in this form is help towards doing without help.”

It is absurd to treat relegation to the pauper class, as a just and proper punishment for a parent who had brought more children into the world than he can educate. As Mr. Chamberlain—to whose courage and tenacity the cause of national education owes so much—points out, there are two answers to this:—

¹ *Political Economy*, Book V., ch. xi. § 8.

(a.) Our object is not to punish the parent but to educate the child, and the latter is sacrificed to the former by our present arrangement. (b.) Even if punishment be due, it is desirable that it should take some more remedial form than the infliction of the stigma of pauperism. Society is punishing itself when it goes out of its way to turn an imprudent parent into a pauper. He never gets over the taint, and remains for the rest of his life a permanent charge on the rates.

This points to the very conclusive answer which is to be given to those writers and politicians who insist that it is no more a primary duty of the state to provide a child with the elements of instruction than it is to supply it with bread. "Parents cannot justly be forced to give their children a certain amount of education," says Mr. Fawcett, "unless it is assumed that this education is as necessary for the mind as food and clothing are for the body."¹ The expediency of compulsion does not rest upon any such assumption. If it were to do so, it would fall to the ground, for the assumption is obviously untrue. Literary education is not in the least degree necessary to the mind in the same sense in which food and clothing are necessary to the body. Without food and clothing the body comes to an end. Nobody can pretend that the mental faculties come to an end if they are not subjected to a certain amount of literary discipline. Food is a physical necessity. Literary instruction is not a necessity at all. It is, no doubt, an

¹ *Pauperism and its Remedies*, p. 62.

indispensable condition of a man being able to do the best with his mind, but his mental faculties can subsist in a very real though very limited state of efficiency without it. His body cannot subsist either efficiently or otherwise without food.

If any one objects that I prove too much, and that as food is indispensable to life, while education is only the perfection of intelligence, it must be more the duty of the state to provide the necessity than the superfluity, the reply is simply this: Food being necessary, people will naturally make the most strenuous efforts to procure it for themselves; the motive of self-preservation is so strong that you may trust to it. Education being a superfluity, there is here no motive universally strong enough for us to rely on its spontaneous operation, and its provision becomes a collective interest.

As the alleged assumption is manifestly false, we must seek for some other justification for interfering with parental authority, when the parent neglects to provide instruction for his child. That justification rests on no assumption at all, but on some such propositions as the following, which are, whether rightly or wrongly, believed to be drawn from 'positive experience':—

(a.) It is not in the least necessary, but it is highly expedient, in a country situated as ours is at the present time, that every child born in it should be equipped with a certain amount of elementary instruction.

(b.) It is the duty of every parent, therefore, in view alike of the interests of his child and of the interests of the community, to provide this instruction for his children.

(c.) The child is unable to protect itself against the neglect of this duty on the part of its parent, and can never in after life wholly repair the consequences of that neglect.

(d.) This duty is systematically neglected by immense numbers of parents, with most mischievous consequences to the rest of society.

(e.) These consequences, negative and positive, are so serious, that the common interest in this case, as in the case of respect for property, demands the erection of a moral duty into a legal obligation.

(f.) The disadvantages and inconveniences of legal interference with parental freedom are more than counterbalanced by the disadvantages and inconveniences arising from a parent's abuse of this freedom to the detriment of other people.

These, or some such propositions, seem to be the ground on which compulsion is to be defended. The argument is in a general way analogous to that of a country whose geographical position and the menaces of whose neighbours make it expedient for every man in it to be legally compelled to undergo a certain amount of military training. It is exactly the same argument as that which warrants the imposition of a legal obligation on a parent to have his child vaccinated.

If we view compulsion in this way, and consider the attendance of a child at school as something which we exact from the parent for the general good, no less than for the good of the individual child, the question of providing elementary instruction at the public charge becomes very simple. This was felt in the case of vaccination, and provision for free vaccination was rightly deemed an indispensable condition of making it obligatory. So if a government insists that every man shall perform military duties, the cost of arms, uniform, and drilling is invariably defrayed from the public purse.

"It should not be forgotten," Mr. Fawcett warns us, "that free education is the first plank in the programme of the International, which is pervaded throughout by the same principle. The state is to provide land for the people at a low price; the state is to provide houses for them at a cheap rate; the state is to lend capital to co-operative associations; and if this demand for free education is not resisted, encouragement will be given to socialism in its most baneful form."¹ This is a very successful and time-honoured way of frightening people, but it is hardly worthy of a man who uses his mind so seriously and independently as Mr. Fawcett usually does. As if it followed from our acceptance of a principle in one set of circumstances, that therefore we are bound to accept it in every other set that any body of men may choose to

¹ *Times*, March 6, 1872.

think equally proper for its application. The question of the propriety of the state providing cheap houses and low-rented land must be decided on its own merits. So must the question of lending capital to co-operative associations be decided on its own merits. It might be desirable to lend capital to co-operative associations, and yet be most highly undesirable for the state to become the universal landowner. And again, both these forms of public intervention might be extremely pernicious—as the present writer believes them to be—and yet it might be extremely desirable to pay for the elementary schools out of rates and taxes. Surely the scale on which a principle is to be applied has something to do with the prudence of applying it. The replacing of the school-pence by rates or taxes would involve a very moderate sum of money, and would be one of the simplest and most practicable tasks ever laid on a Chancellor of the Exchequer. Nobody will say the same of a process which would convert the government into an owner of houses and lands for all the workmen in the country. It is both unfair and illogical, therefore, to try to direct upon one scheme a sidewind of odium and ridicule from other schemes which do not in the least form any part of it. If we happen to agree with the members of the International in the article of free schools, that is no reason why we should accept every or any other article in its programme. “If I and several men,” said Horne Tooke, “are in the Windsor stage-coach, we travel together as long as it may suit us. When I find

myself at Hounslow I get out. They who want to go further may go to Windsor or where they like. But when I get to Hounslow, there I get out; no further will I go, by G——."

In truth, all objections based upon the abstract principle that a parent should provide for the instruction of his children apply to the existing system. This system, we should never forget, does already provide about two-thirds of the cost of instruction for all parents; and in the case of parents coming within the Seventeenth and Twenty Fifth clauses of the Act of 1870, and within the amending Act of last session, it provides the whole cost. The opponents of gratuitous instruction who ask us why we do not insist on the state providing gratuitous bread and milk, might therefore just as well ask the administrators of the present system why they do not provide two-thirds of the food required for the children of the poor. We have admitted the principle that the whole community has such a special kind of interest in getting the children instructed, as to make it worth while to pay from the public purse the greater part of the cost. As soon as you have admitted this, the question whether certain parents shall or shall not pay the fraction that remains unpaid, is only a question of detail.

Then we are told that to be the recipient of instruction provided by the government lowers a parent in his own just self-esteem. Everybody who knows the parents whose children go to the primary schools, is perfectly aware that this is mere moonshine. There

are plenty of parents who would not choose to allow you or me to hand them their children's school-pence out of charity or in a spirit of patronage. But if the school were open, and belonged to that mysterious agency known as government, the parent would no more be humiliated or demoralised by sending his child there, than he is humiliated by going into a free library. Why should a free school humiliate, while a free library delights and elevates? The parent is heartily glad that the government relieves him of two-thirds of the cost of schooling, and he would have no other feeling but entire satisfaction if he were relieved of the other third also. Again, why should a workman be more degraded by free instruction being provided for his children, than the shopkeeper or the professional man, whose son is educated free of cost at a grammar school or at an Oxford college?

Finally, in considering the relative merits of the two systems, is it not evident that the present plan is eleemosynary in principle, and that a workman suffers greater loss of self-respect in accepting education for his children partly at the hands of private managers, who dictate the character of the school and hold its keys in their own hands, than in sharing the advantages of a public institution, to which he is sensible that he has already contributed his fair share of its cost, and which is managed by his representatives?

Apart from theory, are the Americans, Swedes, Swiss, Danes, or Australian colonists wanting in independence or self-respect? Yet they all have free schools.

But the parents, it is contended, would cease to value a commodity for which they paid nothing. To this we make four answers. First, if he were a sensible man he would know perfectly well that the commodity does cost him something ; namely his share, direct or indirect, of rates and taxes. Second, those who send their children to school from a deliberate and rational appreciation of the advantages of schooling, would naturally perceive that those advantages remain the same, whether the child carries its pence in its hand or not. Third, those who only send their children out of respect for custom or fear of the law, attach too small a value to instruction now and as it is, for the fact of their being freed from payment to make any difference. They do not esteem schooling now, and they will not then, but they will, at any rate, have less aversion for it, because it will cost them less. Fourth, the objection is wholly unfounded in fact, like so many others with which the educational controversy is encumbered by writers and speakers who evolve arguments out of their own heads instead of looking at the actual matter of the controversy. On this subject I shall quote the testimony of M. Laveleye, because English writers usually pay a respect to the authority of foreigners which they do not pay to their countrymen, except when they happen to take the same side. "In France," he says, "M. Duruy's report of 1867, discloses to us the fact, that the children who pay follow the course less regularly than the others. The same fact has been established in Belgium. On

an average the number of attendances was 181 for scholars who paid, and 184 for the gratuitous scholars ; and yet the latter, belonging as they do to poor families, have far more reasons for absenting themselves than the others. In some Belgian provinces, in Limburg, and Luxemburg, they raised the school fees : at once a certain number of parents ceased to send their children to school. In America, in some of the States, New York, Connecticut, Michigan, and New Jersey, fees used to be exacted : they were afterwards suppressed, and immediately the number of pupils was considerably increased. The various courses for adults recently opened in France are gratuitous. Are they deserted, or is it not rather their gratuitousness which causes them to be thronged ? In 1863, 5,000 communal schools out of 52,000 were gratuitous. Were they less followed than the others ? No, they were more followed.”¹

“The last Connecticut Report says :—“The proof now before the public that over 10,000 children were barred from school by the Rate Bill [*i. e.*, school fees], buries it beyond the possibility of a resurrection. . . . Michigan quoted our arguments and followed our example in 1869, and during the last month New Jersey adopted a most liberal Free School law ; and thus the only vestige of the Rate Bill left in this broad land was abolished.” • • •

¹ *Et Instruction du Peuple*. P^r Emile de Laveleye, p. 40. A specially good authority in the United States writes to me :—“The opinion in America as to free instruction is practically unanimous—not only that it works well, but that everything else would work ill without it.”

It is urged that it is unfair to make the man who abstains from marriage, and the production of children contribute by his share of the rates and taxes towards the instruction of the children of his less prudent and self-controlling neighbour. To this the following are the answers :—

(a.) The amount of the school-pence is comparatively so small an item—in relation to rent, price of food, clothing, and the substantials of house-keeping—that practically it does not influence a man's calculations whether he can afford to marry or not.

(b.) Already the bachelor, with the rest of the community, contributes the most considerable part of the cost of the instruction of other people's children. To be consistent you ought to put a stop to capitation grants and all other state aid to education.

(c.) Is not the education rate as real a check as the fee? As Sir Charles Dilke has well put it, "The rate falls upon the unmarried lodger the moment that he marries. The fee does not begin to touch him for six years, when his first child is five years old."

(d.) Everybody, unmarried or single, has an equal interest in his neighbour's child having a chance of receiving instruction. It is a matter of public concern and obligation that the population should be instructed, and a man can no more legitimately excuse himself from forwarding this object, than he can excuse himself from paying for a new road in his parish on the ground that he will never use it, or from paying his lighting rate on the ground that he never goes out at

night, or from paying for judges on the ground that nothing would induce him to go to law.

(e.) In the case of the unmarried, who do marry sooner or later, the rate may be regarded as an insurance spread over many years. Under the free school system, the cost of instruction is spread over a lifetime; whereas, on our present system, a man has to find the whole expense just when he is least able to bear it, having also to provide for the subsistence of his family.

It is contended, as a kind of *reductio ad absurdum*, that if you have free education for one class you must have free education for all. This objection has been stated in its most excessive shape by Dr. Rigg. "It is impossible to draw the line between class and class. The skilled workman in England is in proportion far richer, as a rule, than the professional man; the factory operative with his children at work, than the clergyman with his children to send to school; the foundryman than the striving physician. If schools and free education are provided for the operatives, they must assuredly be provided for the professional classes; if for the mechanic, for the retail tradesman; if for the small tradesman, for the large; if for the shopkeeper, also for the merchant and manufacturer. There must be national provision of elementary schools, and grammar schools, and high schools."¹

¹ *National Education*, p. 239.

This bubble of an argument barely needs puncturing. Here, however, are the answers.

(a.) The ground of state interference in education is the expediency, not of having citizens who know Latin and history and drawing, but of making sure that every child shall have a chance of acquiring mastery over the essential instruments of knowledge. On no defensible principle, regard being had to all the conditions of what is practicable, can we ask more than this. The public purse, as we hold, ought on grounds of social expediency to ensure the gratuitous provision of this amount of instruction and no more. In Australia, for example, that limitation has been accepted. No school fees are allowed to be paid for learning reading, writing, grammar, and geography: all higher branches have to be paid for. Why should not this line be drawn? Yet even Mr. Forster, whose strong point, we must admit, whatever else it may be, is not a keen discernment of principles, assured the House of Commons that if primary education be provided free, "secondary education must also be provided free."¹ Pray, why? The only 'must' in the matter is the principle that whatever instruction is provided freely for one citizen ought to be provided freely for every other citizen. If the striving physician and the clergyman want their children to know more than the foundryman's child knows, and more than the state chooses either to insist upon or to provide gratuitously, then let the clergyman and the striving

¹ July 1, 1870.

physician pay for the superfluity. What does the state know of classes? It would undertake to provide a certain amount of instruction gratuitously for everybody. How does this bind it to provide more than that amount for somebody? •

To borrow an excellent illustration, a man may think the services of the police insufficient protection for his property, and may employ a private watchman as well. But he has no claim to more than the ordinary services of the police, afforded alike to all classes, and he must pay his watchman from his own pocket.

(b.) There is real effrontery in this contention that to pay the remaining fraction of the school money of the workmen's children would be a wrong to the professional classes, when we reflect on the enormous mass of educational endowments from which the workmen's children are debarred, and to which the children of the professional classes or those above them have exclusive access. Count up, if you can, the multitude of scholarships, exhibitions, and fellowships, connected with the universities and with the secondary schools all over England; measure the chance which the son of the foundryman has of acquiring the instruction needed for gaining a share in this enormous fund; and then estimate, if you can, the gravity of the complaint that if you provide free primary instruction for the workman you are placing the clergyman, the physician, the tradesman, the manufacturer, at a disadvantage! Why, one of the very strongest

arguments for free primary instruction is the desirableness of ending the monopoly of educational endowments by a very small fraction of the community.

“At present,” says Dr. Rigg, “our Endowed Schools Commission is spreading far and wide the benefits of old endowments. By means of a more economical and stimulating application of endowments, it will diffuse the benefits of education over wide sections of society, in such a way as to reach and help the most really needy and deserving cases.”¹ Well, this is seriously questioned by very competent authorities. Many persons believe that the action of the Commission tends to make merit a more essential condition of participation in endowments—which is no doubt a most excellent alteration—but that at the same time it tends to bestow those endowments on a kind and degree of merit to which the children of the very poor cannot possibly attain, just because they are very poor. However that may be,—and I do not venture to pronounce an opinion either way,—a share in endowments can only be attained by immense numbers of our population, on condition that somebody or other has provided them with means of acquiring mastery over the primary elements of knowledge free of cost to themselves.

Let us now notice some of the practical considera-

¹ *National Education*, p. 238.

tions which commend the abolition of the school-pence in cases where they are not already abolished by the operation of powers conferred on Boards.

Every School-board has now to lay down some rule defining indigence, and fixing the exact degree of poverty which shall entitle a parent to have his children's school-pence remitted, or else paid by the Board on his behalf. This is in itself an extremely difficult task to perform—to say that with such and such earnings a parent is to be classed as indigent, and cannot fairly be called on to provide instruction for his children. The line must be something like a hard and fast one; and no one who has not sat down to the task can know how difficult it is to make up your mind what income in any given locality marks the exact point at which the addition of school-pence can be fairly borne and reasonably imposed.

Then, when you have fixed it, a new set of difficulties make their appearance. How are you to find out, where a multitude of cases are pressed on before you, whether the applicants for remission of payment of school-pence are stating their resources truly? How are you to verify every statement as to the amount of the wages which come to a family? Everybody knows the fraudulent under-statements of income of which the middle classes are guilty when making returns for the income-tax. Can we expect the semi-indigent classes to be more accurate and scrupulous in the statements they make to the School-board?

Again, supposing that the Board has drawn its line

wisely, and that the applicants state their wages truly, there still remain the class whose wages are just above the line. If the Board resolves to pay or remit fees for a parent whose total incoming per week is 17s. 6d., do you think there is no sense of injustice and uneven usage in the mind of the man whose total incoming is 18s., 19s., or £1, and who is forced to pay an extra rate in the shape of the school-pence, from which his neighbour who is earning almost as much is wholly exempt? I do not say there is any injustice in this, but only that the people who earn small wages, to whom every fourpence and sixpence counts for something worth considering, whose minds are fretful with hardship and sore with struggling, are very apt to feel an injustice in it, and so to find one more odious association connected with the school and its surroundings. This is no mere logical objection to the present system. It is derived from experience, and describes an actual state of things. A. withdraws his children from school. The Board wants to know why. He says he only earns 17s. a week. Then, says the Board, send your children back, and we will not ask you for their pence. B. watches the process, and sees that A. by taking his children from school has put eightpence or a shilling a week into his pocket. Surely that is a very good argument with B. why he should go and do likewise."

Another point. When bad times come, and wages fall, and a man or woman has a hard struggle, what expense are they so sure to cut off as the superfluity

of schooling for their children? Indeed they have not much choice. The consequence is that unless instruction is gratuitous, every occasion of bad times, whether local or general, is the signal for the interruption of instruction, and the child misses six months or a year—a loss which can never be replaced. Then, you say, the Board will provide the instruction gratuitously during this time. Good, that is the free schooling we ask for. But it is free schooling in its most inefficient and troublesome shape. For it would be generally some weeks before the child's non-attendance at any school would be observed, and when it was discovered, the whole machinery of inquiry and investigation, which takes time and probably costs money, would have to be put into motion—still with a very good chance of many of the missing children escaping notice. If primary instruction were free, bad times would make no alteration. The child's attendance would continue as regular as before. Our great principle should be to overlook nothing that helps to interrupt facility and regularity; we should make the regular attendance of children at school as easy, as inviting, as free from liability to interruption from outer circumstances, as the conditions of the matter will by any possibility allow.

But the school-pence are so small an amount. Well, they are to a workman something like the amount of income-tax to ourselves. Now observe what the attitude of the state comes to in this matter of instruction. It says to the labouring man this:—"Though you think

subsist unless the parents help to pay for them ; and no parent would pay for bad instruction in a sectarian school, when he could procure good instruction for nothing in a Board school. Well, I cannot see that any wrong would be done to the sectarian managers by such a proceeding. I cannot admit that the owners of the sectarian schools have the shadow of a vested interest, though they have a claim not to be dealt with in an injuriously hasty manner. It is simply monstrous to urge that these volunteers are, for ever to stop the way to the formation of a national force. The owners of schools only provided half the original cost of the buildings, and they have always provided a great deal less than half of the cost of the maintenance of the school. On what principle does this constitute an eternal right to the everlasting control of our educational system, and an inexpugnable claim to exclude all other schools from their parishes ?

This amazing pretension was forcibly exposed in 1870 by Mr. Winterbotham :—"They say the public faith is pledged to them, that they have been induced to build schools, and partially maintain them, by the expectation of public aid, and that therefore it would be a breach of public faith now to withdraw or withhold it. Now I think this is a most dangerous doctrine, and one which the government would hesitate to apply in any other case. If the present system of voluntary schools aided by the state be a wise one, then let it be defended on its merits. But if it be not, and if it cannot be shown that it is for the public

interest that the system should be continued, I deny altogether that any existing school has any, the smallest, claim upon the public purse. When and by whom was this pledge given? Who had power to give it? You offered help to build schools. Schools were built, and you paid what you offered. You offered aid to qualified teachers. Teachers qualified and you paid them. You changed your plan, you offered payment for each child educated. Children were educated, and you paid what you offered. But where in all this is there any pledge for the continuance of these payments? You have altered from time to time the conditions and modes of your aid, and this without the consent and against the protest of those who received it. . . . Yet if you are bound at all you are bound altogether, and you have no more right to alter the terms of the contract than to abolish it altogether. This theory of the faith of the country being pledged to the maintenance of the existing system will not bear a moment's investigation. How does it differ from the case of Maynooth College, or indeed of the Irish Church? The Church had not received only annual aid dependent on the annual vote of parliament, but held and had held for centuries, the capital of the public property they enjoyed. And in expectation of its continued enjoyment much more had been done and paid and risked than the managers of aided schools have done or paid. Yet that did not prevent your resuming public property when you thought fit, and is it to be said that

all schools you have aided have a right to continued support from the state for ever?"¹

Nothing can be added to this. If it be expedient to establish free Board schools, there is no lawful obstacle to such a step in the vested rights of the sectarian schools. The managers of these schools are perfectly at liberty to keep them open, if they can support them wholly out of their own pockets, or if they can persuade the parents to go on paying for a worse instruction than they can procure gratuitously elsewhere. In some cases, no doubt, they would avail themselves of this right, and insist on competing with the Board school. In the majority of cases, however, they would no doubt lose no time in transferring their buildings to the Board, reserving to themselves the privilege of sending the clergyman or some other person at times agreed upon with the Board to give religious instruction of the kind which they happened to prefer.

It is therefore not true that the scheme of gratuitous secular instruction would involve a vast waste and sacrifice of all that voluntary effort has done for the country. There would be no waste or sacrifice at all. Voluntary effort has done two things. It has helped to provide instruction for certain hundreds of thousands of children during the last thirty years; and it has helped to build certain hundreds of school-houses. You cannot possibly sacrifice the first of these results of voluntary effort. The instruction

¹ Speech in the House of Commons, March 15, 1870.

has been acquired, such as it is, and there is an end of that. The school-houses certainly are capable of being sacrificed, if the managers insist on not transferring them to the Boards. But what respectable motive will they have for keeping them shut up and empty? And this will be the only alternative to transferring them. Managers of schools are like other people, and if they find that the country is bent on having free instruction and abandoning the so-called voluntary system, they will very soon make their account with the new state of things. That is, they will hand their school-houses over to the Boards. In ninety cases out of a hundred this will be equivalent to handing them over to themselves, for it will mostly be their own fault if the managers of the existing schools do not form part of the bodies which have to administer the same schools when reconstituted. If their zeal for popular education is as disinterested as they pretend, they will have the same reasons for taking a part in it as they have now. If their zeal is not for popular education, but for sectarian influence, then the sooner they are dispossessed of the means of gratifying this zeal at the expense of other people, the better it will be for the cause which they profess to have so deeply at heart.

Once more, then, the only possibility of wasting what voluntarism has done for us in education lies in the disuse of the school-houses. That disuse would not practically ever take place. The managers are rate-payers; they are as sensible as their neighbours;

they are influenced as much as their neighbours by public opinion; they have everything to lose, and nothing to gain by insisting on keeping a fabric which the parish would want, and for which they would have no use. Let no amount of sulky menace persuade us that they would not transfer, when they found their scholars' fees about to be withdrawn. They would be guided by their interests, and all their interests would point in one way.

xv.

Let us turn to the question of cost. To begin with, the cost of a free school would not be a penny more than the cost of the same school partially supported by the children's pence. Everything would go on just as it does now, except that either rates or taxes would make up the whole instead of the greater part of the expense, which they have to make up now. The controversy as to the relative cheapness of voluntary and rate-supported schools does not touch this question. The management of the school would be just as economical or just as extravagant whether the final fraction is provided by private or public pence. The people therefore whose contribution to the question of national education consists first in warning us that School-boards will spoil the instruction by niggardliness and parcimony, and then in assuring our opponents that School-boards will not care how lavishly they spend the public money—these eminently consistent reasoners have nothing to say on the question

whether it is well to extend the principle of free primary instruction from a part to the whole of the community.

Under the present system, taking the figures for 1872,—

	£	s.	d.
The average grant per scholar in average attendance was	0	11	9 $\frac{3}{4}$
The total cost per scholar	1	7	8 $\frac{1}{2}$

Now we contend that if you establish School-boards, and so stop the excessive multiplication of schools on a very small scale, as well as amalgamate existing schools so as to secure larger aggregates with a corresponding improvement both in efficiency and economy, the cost would not exceed £1 5s. per head at the most. Supposing this to be correct, the total cost of educating 3,000,000 children up to a very high standard would be £3,750,000.

Now it would be eminently presumptuous in any private individual or non-official body to insist on this sum being raised in any particular way. Grant that the nation has to provide this sum; the precise mode of providing it is a detail which belongs to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Still, it is well in order to give a certain precision and reality to our ideas on the subject, to make definite suggestions on this part of it. The candid disputant will take them in good faith for what they are, as tentative suggestions which may be varied and improved to any extent, as financial authorities may deem best.

It is suggested then, that two-thirds of the amount should come from the Consolidated Fund. The government now pay 11s. 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per head. Supposing the cost to be 25s., then on this plan the government would have to raise their average payment from 11s. 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. to 16s. 8d. Thus towards the £3,750,000 the Consolidated Fund would contribute £2,500,000. The remaining third, that is £1,250,000, would have to be raised out of the local rates.

Assuming the rateable value of property throughout the country to be £100,000,000, this sum would be exactly covered by a 3d. rate.

Of course it would be easier, and would avoid a good deal of popular outcry, if you took the whole sum required out of the Consolidated Fund. One unanswerable objection to this is that we should lose the only guarantees we have for thrifty administration. We must boldly face whatever outcry the clergy and others may succeed in raising. And we face it by two arguments:—First, that the total cost to the community would be not a penny more, but something less. If the system of local taxation is a bad and unjust one, let it be amended. That is a financier's question. If the incidence of the rates is unequal or unfair, let it be re-adjusted. If there are burdens imposed on localities which it is expedient to shift to the national exchequer, shift them. No one can seriously think that a three-penny rate—liberating the voluntary subscriber from the necessity of contributing, and *liberating the parent*

from the necessity of providing school-pence — would be found an excessive burden. Let us take a practical case, the details of which are furnished to me by Mr. Collings, who has done so much to press the question of free schools on public attention. According to a very high calculation there should be in the primary schools of Birmingham 60,000 children. Let us allow them 25s. per head per annum. The government grants would cover two-thirds of this. A 5*d.* rate would more than cover the balance. Thus:—

Grants	£51,240
A 5 <i>d.</i> rate	25,620
	76,860
Amount required	75,000
	1,860

Or let us put it more simply and intelligibly still. A workman living in a ten pound house would pay 4*s.* 2*d.* per annum, and would receive in return instruction for his children. And he would know that all his neighbours were doing the same.¹

The second reply to the popular outcry about rates

¹ The following budget for the Birmingham day-schools in 1869 may be useful to the reader who does not know the present way of raising the school money. Of course, the proportion among the several items is not the same everywhere, but this is probably a fair example of the educational budget of a large town:—

	£	s.	d.
Government grants	7,673	18	0
Voluntary subscriptions	3,455	7	8
Congregational collections	894	2	6
Endowments, and other sources	1,749	2	9
School pence	10,252	5	2
	£24,024	16	1

is this. If we have to pay more money, we should get so much more for it, that the new system will still be the cheaper of the two. The cost of the present system properly considered is enormous. Its advocates divide the total expenditure by the total number of children at school. This is unreasonable and absurd. The greater number of these children get no instruction of the smallest value, and might nearly, if not quite, as well be amusing themselves in the streets. What would be thought of a manufacturer, who should in reckoning the cost of production count the 'wasters' for as much as the perfected article? As Mr. Fitch has said, "the true measure of success are those who pass, and not those who float in and out, and whose instruction is purely nominal."

In the year ending August 31, 1871, the total expenditure was £1,643,669 2s. 8d.

The total number of children making full passes in the three highest standards was 122,905.

The total number in Sixth Standard, 19,735.

Reckoning cost on the former it is £13 7s. 5d. per head; on the latter, £83 5s. 9d.

Would it not be the truest economy to spend a million a year more, at the same time increasing the number of really educated children to something like the Prussian standard, thus reducing the cost per head ten or twenty fold?

Those who find it difficult to answer the arguments advanced in the preceding pages, appear, if one may

judge from the criticisms which have been passed upon them in the press, to find comfort in the assertion that public opinion rejects the proposals to which these arguments are intended to lead. This assertion usually means no more than that a measure could not be got through the House of Commons. Perhaps on the whole it is well that out of the many scores of writers on public affairs, there should be one or two who hesitate to accept the feasibility of immediately carrying a measure as the final test of its wisdom and fitness. It may be very well for a writer of leading articles in the *Times* to insist on limiting his outlook to to-morrow morning, but surely there is no harm in occasionally considering a subject with a slightly wider horizon. The evils of a narrow and inadequate preparatory discussion were never more vividly exemplified than in that unfortunate piece of legislation, which was so ridiculously believed by its authors to have settled the question of public instruction.

The question of free schools, for instance, can hardly be said to have received any discussion at all in this country, though no article in the modern programme has been more vigorously sustained by the best continental reformers, from Condorcet downwards. Perhaps one reason for this is the just suspicion on the part of many influential persons, who take a sort of interest in popular education, and yet are still more deeply interested in certain abuses, that if we are to impose a heavier burden on the country for the sake of pro-

viding gratuitous instruction, people may begin to look around them and ask, whether after all the whole of the endowments of the National Church are at present put to the most wise, just, and useful purposes that the electors can think of.

APPENDIX.

(A.)

The Elementary Education Act of 1870

I have thought it might be useful to print here some of the principal portions of this Act.

Regulations for Conduct of Public Elementary Schools.

7. Every elementary school which is conducted in accordance with the following regulations shall be a public elementary school within the meaning of this Act; and every public elementary school shall be conducted in accordance with the following regulations (a copy of which regulations shall be conspicuously put up in every such school); namely,

- (1.) It shall not be required, as a condition of any child being admitted into or continuing in the school, that he shall attend or abstain from attending any Sunday school, or any place of religious worship, or that he shall attend any religious observance or any instruction in religious subjects in the school or elsewhere, from which observance or instruction he may be withdrawn by his parent, or that he shall, if withdrawn by his parent, attend the school on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his parent belongs :
- (2.) The time or times during which any religious observance is practised or instruction in religious subjects is given at any meeting of the school shall be either at the beginning or at the end or at the beginning and the end of such meeting, and shall be inserted in a time-table to be

approved by the Education Department, and to be kept permanently and conspicuously affixed in every school-room; and any scholar may be withdrawn by his parent from such observance or instruction without forfeiting any of the other benefits of the school :

- (3.) The school shall be open at all times to the inspection of any of Her Majesty's inspectors, so, however, that it shall be no part of the duties of such inspector to inquire into any instruction in religious subjects given at such school, or to examine any scholar therein in religious knowledge or in any religious subject or book :
- (4.) The school shall be conducted in accordance with the conditions required to be fulfilled by an elementary school in order to obtain an annual parliamentary grant.

Management and Maintenance of Schools by School Board.

14. Every school provided by a school board shall be conducted under the control and management of such board in accordance with the following regulations :

- (1.) The school shall be a public elementary school within the meaning of this Act :
- (2.) No religious catechism or religious formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination shall be taught in the school.

15. The school board may, if they think fit, from time to time delegate any of their powers under this Act except the power of raising money, and in particular may delegate the control and management of any school provided by them, with or without any conditions or restrictions, to a body of managers appointed by them, consisting of not less than three persons.

17. Every child attending a school provided by any school board shall pay such weekly fee as may be prescribed by the school board, with the consent of the Education Department, but the school board may from time to time, for a renewable period not exceeding six months, remit the whole or any part of such fee in the case of any child when they are of opinion that the parent of such child is unable from poverty to pay the same, but such remission shall not be deemed to be parochial relief given to such parent.

Transfer of Private Schools to Boards.

23. The managers of any elementary school in the district of a school board may, in manner provided by this Act, make an arrangement with the school board for transferring their school to

such school board, and the school board may assent to such arrangement.

An arrangement under this section may be made by the managers by a resolution or other act as follows ; (that is to say,)

- (1.) Where there is any instrument declaring the trusts of the school, and such instrument provides any manner in which or any assent with which a resolution or act binding the managers is to be passed or done, then in accordance with the provisions of such instrument :
- (2.) Where there is no such instrument, or such instrument contains no such provisions, then in the manner and with the assent, if any, in and with which it may be shown to the Education Department to have been usual for a resolution or act binding such managers to be passed or done :
- (3.) If no manner or assent can be shown to have been usual, then by a resolution passed by a majority of not less than two-thirds of those members of their body who are present at a meeting of the body summoned for the purpose, and vote on the question, and with the assent of any other person whose assent under the circumstances appears to the Education Department to be requisite.

And in every case such arrangement shall be made only—

- (1.) With the consent of the Education Department ; and,
- (2.) If there are annual subscribers to such school, with the consent of a majority, not being less than two-thirds in number, of those of the annual subscribers who are present at a meeting duly summoned for the purpose, and vote on the question.

Boards may Pay Fees.

25. The school board may, if they think fit, from time to time, for a renewable period not exceeding six months, pay the whole or any part of the school fees payable at any public elementary school by any child resident in their district whose parent is in their opinion unable from poverty to pay the same ; but no such payment shall be made or refused on condition of the child attending any public elementary school other than such as may be selected by the parent ; and such payment shall not be deemed to be parochial relief given to such parent.

Boards may establish Free Schools.

26. If a school board satisfy the Education Department that, on the ground of the poverty of the inhabitants of any place in their district, it is expedient for the interests of education to provide a school at which no fees shall be required from the scholars, the board may, subject to such rules and conditions as the Education Department may prescribe, provide such school and may admit scholars to such school without requiring any fee.

And Industrial Schools.

27. A school board shall have the same powers of contributing money in the case of an industrial school as is given to a prison authority by section twelve of "The Industrial Schools Act, 1866;" and upon the election of a school board in a borough the council of that borough shall cease to have power to contribute under that section.

28. A school board may, with the consent of the Education Department, establish, build, and maintain a certified industrial school within the meaning of the Industrial Schools Act, 1866, and shall for that purpose have the same powers as they have for the purpose of providing sufficient school accommodation for their district: Provided that the school board, so far as regards any such industrial school, shall be subject to the jurisdiction of one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State in the same manner as the managers of any other industrial school are subject, and such school shall be subject to the provisions of the said Act, and not of this Act.

Constitution of Boards.

29. The school board shall be elected in manner provided by this Act,—in a borough by the persons whose names are on the burgess roll of such borough for the time being in force, and in a parish not situate in the metropolis by the ratepayers.

Cumulative Vote.

At every such election every voter shall be entitled to a number of votes equal to the number of the members of the school board to be elected, and may give all such votes to one candidate, or may distribute them among the candidates, as he thinks fit.

The school board in the metropolis shall be elected in manner hereinafter provided by this Act.

United School Districts.

40. Where the Education Department are of opinion that it would be expedient to form a school district larger than a borough or a parish or any school district formed under this Act, they may, except in the metropolis, by order made after such inquiry and notice as hereinafter mentioned, form a united school district by uniting any two or more adjoining school districts, and upon such union cause a school board to be formed for such united school district.

Contributory Districts.

49. The Education Department may by order direct that one school district shall contribute towards the provision or maintenance of public elementary schools in another school district or districts, and in such case the former (or contributing district) shall pay to the latter (or school owning district or districts) such proportion of the expenses of such provision or maintenance or a sum calculated in such manner as the Education Department may from time to time prescribe.

Permissive Compulsion.

74. Every school board may from time to time, with the approval of the Education Department, make bye-laws for all or any of the following purposes:—

- (1.) Requiring the parents of children of such age, not less than five years nor more than thirteen years, as may be fixed by the bye-laws, to cause such children (unless there is some reasonable excuse) to attend school:
- (2.) Determining the time during which children are so to attend school; provided that no such bye-law shall prevent the withdrawal of any child from any religious observance or instruction in religious subjects, or shall require any child to attend school on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his parent belongs, or shall be contrary to anything contained in any Act for regulating the education of children employed in labour:
- (3.) Providing for the remission or payment of the whole or any part of the fees of any child where the parent satisfies the school board that he is unable from poverty to pay the same:
- (4.) Imposing penalties for the breach of any bye-laws:
- (5.) Revoking or altering any bye-law previously made.

Provided that any bye-law under this section requiring a child between ten and thirteen years of age to attend school shall provide for the total or partial exemption of such child from the obligation to attend school if one of Her Majesty's inspectors certifies that such child has reached a standard of education specified in such bye-law.

Any of the following reasons shall be a reasonable excuse; namely,

- (1.) That the child is under efficient instruction in some other manner :
- (2.) That the child has been prevented from attending school by sickness or any unavoidable cause :
- (3.) That there is no public elementary school open which the child can attend within such distance, not exceeding three miles, measured according to the nearest road from the residence of such child, as the bye-laws may prescribe.

Parliamentary Grant.

96. After the thirty-first day of March one thousand eight hundred and seventy-one no parliamentary grant shall be made to any elementary school which is not a public elementary school within the meaning of this Act.

No parliamentary grant shall be made in aid of building, enlarging, improving, or fitting up any elementary school, except in pursuance of a memorial duly signed, and containing the information required by the Education Department for enabling them to decide on the application, and sent to the Education Department on or before the thirty-first day of December one thousand eight hundred and seventy.

97. The conditions required to be fulfilled by an elementary school in order to obtain an annual parliamentary grant shall be those contained in the minutes of the Education Department in force for the time being, and shall amongst other matters provide that the thirty-first day of March one thousand eight hundred and seventy-one—

- (1.) Such grants shall not be made in respect of any instruction in religious subjects :
- (2.) Such grant shall not for any year exceed the income of the school for that year which was derived from voluntary contributions, and from school fees, and from any sources other than the parliamentary grant ;

but such conditions shall not require that the school shall be in connection with a religious denomination, or that religious instruction shall be given in the school, and shall not give any preference

or advantage to any school on the ground that it is or is not provided by a school board :

Provided that where the school board satisfy the Education Department that in any year ending the twenty-ninth of September the sum required for the purpose of the annual expenses of the school board of any school district, and actually paid to the treasurer of such board by the rating authority, amounted to a sum which would have been raised by a rate of threepence in the pound on the rateable value of such district, and any such rate would have produced less than twenty pounds, or less than seven shillings and sixpence per child of the number of children in the average attendance at the public elementary schools provided by such school board, such school board shall be entitled, in addition to the annual parliamentary grant in aid of the public elementary schools provided by them, to such further sum out of moneys provided by Parliament as, when added to the sum actually so paid by the rating authority, would, as the case may be, make up the sum of twenty pounds, or the sum of seven shillings and sixpence for each child, but no attendance shall be reckoned for the purpose of calculating such average attendance unless it is an attendance as defined in the said minutes :

Provided that no such minute of the Education Department not in force at the time of the passing of this Act shall be deemed to be in force until it has lain for not less than one month on the table of both Houses of Parliament.

98. If the managers of any school which, is situate in the district of a school board acting under this Act, and is not previously in receipt of an annual parliamentary grant, whether such managers are a school board or not, apply to the Education Department for a parliamentary grant, the Education Department may, if they think that such school is unnecessary, refuse such application.

99. The managers of every elementary school shall have power to fulfil the conditions required in pursuance of this Act to be fulfilled in order to obtain a parliamentary grant, notwithstanding any provision contained in any instrument regulating the trusts or management of their school, and to apply such grant accordingly.

(B.)

*Extracts from the Privy Council Rules.**Grants to Day Schools.*

19. The managers of a school which has met not less than 400 times, in the morning and afternoon, in the course of a year, as defined by Article 13, may claim at the end of such year—

A. The sum of 6s. per scholar, according to the average number in attendance throughout the year (Article 26).

B. For every scholar present on the day of examination, who has attended not less than 250 morning or afternoon meetings of the school :—

1. If above four, and under seven years of age at the end of the year (Article 13),—

(a.) 8s., or

(b.) 10s. if the infants are taught as a separate department, by a certificated teacher of their own, in a room properly constructed and furnished for their instruction.

2. If more than seven years of age, 12s., subject to examination (Article 28), viz.—

4s. for passing in reading ;

4s. for passing in writing ;

4s. for passing in arithmetic.

20. 150 attendances (Article 23) qualify for examination—

(a.) Scholars attending school under any half-time Act.

(b.) Boys above 10 attending school in a rural district.

21. If the time-table of the school, in use throughout the year, has provided for one or more specific subjects of secular instruction beyond Article 28,—

A grant of 3s. per subject may be made for every day scholar, presented in Standards IV.—VI. (Article 28) who passes a satisfactory examination in not more than two of such subjects (Schedule IV.)

No grant may be claimed under this Article on account of any scholar who has been examined, in the same subject, within the preceding year, by the Department of Science and Art.

Grants to Evening Schools.

22. The managers of a school which has met not less than 60 times in the evening, in the course of a year, as defined by Article 107, may claim (Article 108 and 109),—

- (a.) The sum of 4s. per scholar, according to the average number in attendance throughout the year (Article 26).
- (b.) For every scholar who has attended not less than 40 evening meetings of the school 7s. 6d., subject to examination (Article 28), viz., 2s. 6d. for passing in reading, 2s. 6d. for passing in writing, and 2s. 6d. for passing in arithmetic.

Calculation of Attendance.

23. Attendance at a morning or afternoon meeting may not be reckoned for any scholar who has been under instruction in secular subjects less than two hours, nor attendance at an evening meeting for any scholar who has been under similar instruction less than one hour and a half.

24. Attendance of boys at drill, under a competent instructor, for not more than two hours a week, and 40 hours in the year, may, in a day school be counted as school attendance.

25. Attendances may not be reckoned for any scholar above 18, or in a day school under 3, or, in an evening school, under 12 years of age.

26. The average number of scholars in attendance for any period is found by adding together the attendances of all the scholars for the same period, and dividing the sum by the number of times the school has met within the same period; the quotient is the average number in attendance.

27. In calculating the average number in attendance, the attendances of half-time scholars reckon for no more than those of other scholars.

Standards of Examination.

(These have been given at p. 20 of the text.)

29. No scholar may be presented a second time for examination.

- (a.) Under a lower standard; or,
- (b.) Under the same standard.

30. After Dec. 31, 1874, no day scholar above 9 years of age, and no evening scholar above 13, will be examined in Standard I.

31. After Dec. 31, 1875, no day scholar above 9 years of age, and no evening scholar above 13, will be examined in Standard II.

Pupil-teachers.

70. Pupil-teachers are boys or girls employed to serve in a school on the following conditions, namely :

(a.) *That the school is reported by the inspector to be—*

1. Under a duly certificated teacher (Articles 43 and 57).
2. Held in suitable premises.
3. Well furnished and well supplied with books and apparatus.
4. Properly organized and skilfully instructed.
5. Under good discipline.
6. Likely to be maintained during the period of engagement.

(b.) *That the pupil-teachers be not less than 13 years (completed) of age at the date of the engagement.*

(c.) *Be of the same sex as the certificated teacher under whom they serve ; but in a mixed school female pupil-teachers may serve under a master, and may receive instruction from him out of school hours, on condition that some respectable woman, approved by the managers, be invariably present during the whole time that such instruction is being given.*

(d.) *Be presented to the inspector for examination at the time and place fixed by his notice (Article 11).*

(e.) *Pass the examinations and produce the certificates specified in Schedule I.*

(f.) *That the managers enter into an agreement in the terms of the memorandum in the Second Schedule to this Code, a copy of which memorandum is sent to the managers for every candidate approved by the Department.*

(g.) *That not more than four pupil-teachers are engaged in the school for every certificated teacher serving in it. (This Article will take effect from the 1st of April 1874.)*

71. The Education Department is not a party to the engagement, and confines itself to ascertaining, on the admission of the pupil-teacher and at the end of each year of the service—

(a.) *Whether the prescribed examination is passed before the inspector.*

(b.) *Whether the prescribed certificates are produced from the managers and teachers.*

TRAINING SCHOOLS.

SECTION I.

83. A training school includes—

(a) A college, for boarding, lodging, and instructing candidates for the office of teachers in elementary schools; and

(b.) A practising department, in which such candidates may learn the exercise of their profession.

84. No grant is made to a training school unless the Education Department is satisfied with the premises, management, and staff.

SECTION II.

Grants to Training Schools.

85. Annual grants are made to the practising departments on the same condition as to other public elementary schools.

86. Grants are placed to the credit of each college of £100 for every master, and of £70 for every mistress who, having been trained in such college during two years, has, since December 1862,—

(a.) completed the prescribed period of probation (Article 51), and become qualified to receive a certificate as a teacher, in a public elementary school, or in a training college;

(b.) been reported by the proper department in each case to have completed a like period of good service as an elementary teacher in the Army or Royal Navy, or (within Great Britain) in Poor Law Schools, Certified Industrial Schools, or Certified Reformatories.

87. Teachers who have been trained for one year only may obtain certificates after probation (Article 51), or may be reported by the proper department, upon the same terms as others; and grants, of half the amounts specified in Article 86, may be placed to the credit of the colleges in which they were trained, provided—

(a.) they completed their training before 1st January, 1864; or

(b) are teachers of infants, having—

- 1, received a complete and special course of training for that service in their colleges, which must have been previously recognised by the Education Department as providing such a course; and

- 2, undergone their probation in infant schools.

88. (*Lapsed Article.*)

89. The annual grant to each college is paid out of the sums placed to its credit (Articles 86, 87), and must not exceed—

(a.) 75 per cent. of the expenditure of the college for the year, certified in such manner as their Lordships may require.

(b.) £50 for each male, and £35 for each female, Queen's scholar (Article 96), in residence for continuous training throughout the year for which it is being paid.

90. The annual grant to each college is paid as follows:—

(a.) An instalment of £12 (males), or £8 (females) is paid on 1st March, 1st June, and 1st September, in respect of every Queen's scholar (Article 96) in residence for continuous training throughout the year.

(b.) The balance is adjusted as soon as the college accounts for the year have been closed, audited, and approved by the Education Department.

SECTION III.

Admission into Training Schools.

91. An examination of candidates for admission into training schools is annually held at each college in December, during the week following the examination for certificates (Article 100).

92. The examination extends to the subjects required in the course of a pupil-teacher's engagement (Schedule I.)

93. The candidates are selected, and admitted to the examination, by the authorities of each training school on their own responsibility, subject to no other conditions, on the part of the Education Department, than the candidates—

(a.) intend *bonâ fide* to adopt and follow the profession of teacher in schools fulfilling the conditions of Article 86 (a) or

(b.) having been pupil-teachers, have successfully completed their engagement.

(c.) not having been pupil-teachers, will be more than 18 years of age on the 1st of January next following the date of the examination. This article will apply to pupil-teachers whose engagement may have been determined under section 5 of the memorandum agreement (Article 70 f), (1) without discredit to themselves, and (2) for reasons approved by the Education Department.

94. The successful candidates are arranged in two classes in order of merit.

95. The authorities of each training school may propose to the Education Department for admission any candidate declared to be admissible pursuant to Article 94.

REGULATIONS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD FOR LONDON, FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF ITS SCHOOLS.

I.—General Regulations.

1. Infant schools shall be mixed.
2. Senior schools shall be separate.
3. Large schools shall be provided wherever it is practicable to do so.

4. As a general rule, female teachers only shall be employed in infant and girls' schools.

5. The period during which the children are under actual instruction in school shall be five hours daily for five days in the week.

6. During the time of religious teaching or religious observance, any children withdrawn from such teaching or observance shall receive separate instruction in secular subjects.

7. Every occurrence of corporal punishment shall be formally recorded in a book kept for the purpose. Pupil-teachers are absolutely prohibited from inflicting such punishment. The head teacher shall be held directly responsible for every punishment of the kind.

8. Music and drill shall be taught in every school during part of the time devoted to actual instruction.

9. In all day schools provision shall be made for giving effect to the following resolution of the board passed on the 8th March, 1871:—

“That in the schools provided by the board the Bible shall be read, and there shall be given such explanations and such instruction therefrom in the principles of morality and religion, as are suited to the capacities of children: provided always—

1. That in such explanations and instruction the provisions of the Act in Sections VII. and XIV. be strictly observed, both in letter and spirit, and that no attempt be made in any such schools to attach children to any particular denomination.
2. That in regard of any particular school, the board shall consider and determine upon any application by managers, parents, or ratepayers of the district, who may show special cause for exception of the school from the operation of this resolution, in whole or in part.”

10. In all schools provision may be made for giving effect to the following resolution of the board passed on July 26th, 1871:—

- “1. That in accordance with the general practice of existing elementary schools, provision may be made for offering

prayer and using hymns in schools provided by the board at the 'time or times' when, according to Section VII., Sub-Section II., of the Elementary Education Act, 'religious observances' may be 'practised.'

- "2. That the arrangements for such 'religious observances' be left to the discretion of the teachers and managers of each school, with the right of appeal to the board, by teacher, managers, parents, or ratepayers of the district:

Provided always—

- "That in the offering of any prayers, and in the use of any hymns, the provisions of the Act in Sections VII. and XIV. be strictly observed, both in letter and spirit, and that no attempt be made to attach children to any particular denomination."

11. All the children in any one infant, junior, or senior school, shall pay the same weekly fees.

12. The minimum weekly fee in infant, junior, and senior schools, shall be one penny, and the maximum fee ninepence.

13. The half-timers attending any school shall pay half the weekly fees chargeable in that school, provided that such half-fees be not less than one penny.

14. The fees payable in evening schools shall be left to the discretion of the managers, subject to the approval of the board.

15. If exceptional circumstances should appear to render the establishment of a free school, in any locality, expedient, the facts shall be brought before the board, and its decision taken upon the special case.

II.—*Regulations for Infant Schools.*

16. In infant schools instruction shall be given in the following subjects:—

- (a.) The Bible, and the principles of religion and morality, in accordance with the terms of the resolution of the board passed on the 8th March, 1871.
- (b.) Reading, writing, and arithmetic.
- (c.) Object lessons of a simple character, with some such exercise of the hands and eyes as is given in the "Kinder-Garten" system.
- (d.) Music and drill.

III.—*Regulations for Junior and Senior Schools.*

17. In junior and senior schools, certain kinds of instruction shall form an essential part of the teaching of every school; but

others may or may not be added to them, at the discretion of the managers of individual schools, or by the special direction of the board. The instruction in discretionary subjects shall not interfere with the efficiency of the teaching of the essential subjects.

18. The following subjects shall be essential.

- (a.) The Bible, and the principles of religion and morality, in accordance with the terms of the resolution of the board, passed on the 8th March, 1871.
- (b.) Reading, writing, arithmetic; English grammar and composition, and the principles of book-keeping in senior schools; with mensuration in senior boys' schools.
- (c.) Systematized object-lessons, embracing in the six school years a course of elementary instruction in physical science, and serving as an introduction to the science examinations which are conducted by the Science and Art Department.
- (d.) The History of England.
- (e.) Elementary geography.
- (f.) Elementary social economy.
- (g.) Elementary drawing.
- (h.) Music and drill.
- (i.) In girls' schools, plain needlework and cutting out.

19. The following subjects shall be discretionary:—

- (a.) Domestic economy.
- (b.) Algebra.
- (c.) Geometry.

20. Subject to the approbation of the board, any extra subjects recognised by the New Code (1871) shall be considered to be discretionary subjects.

(C.)

Outlay on Education in Chicago.

To understand clearly the figures in the following statement of the cost of education in the public schools of this city, the following things must be borne in mind :—

1. The High School, in which are educated over 500 scholars, ages from 15 to 20, is no part of the common school system. The course of study is an advanced one, and the cost is greatly in excess of the cost of the ordinary schools. The same remarks apply to the normal school. Both schools are supported out of the taxes and funds raised for the public schools.

2. The land, and school buildings, have been bought and paid for out of the public funds. In computing the interest on the money thus invested, the values given are not the cost, but the present values, including, of course, the great rise in the value of the land which has taken place since the same was bought for the schools. The actual outlay for the land and schools does not probably exceed one half the amount at which they are now valued, and on which interest is computed. With this explanation, the enclosed statement compiled from the official records of the Board of Education will be better understood. Here is the actual cost for the years 1871-2 and 1872-3.

	1871-2	1872-3
No. of Teachers	477	560
Average number of Pupils for the Year	24,589	28,838
Paid for Tuition	\$378,671	\$480,648
Average cost of Tuition per Pupil	15.43	14.98
Paid for Fuel	25,980	30,351
Paid for Janitors	27,956	31,442
Cost per Pupil for Fuel and Janitors	2.20	2.11
Cost of Repairs, Supplies, and General Expenses	46,837	32,441
Total for support of Schools	\$479,444	\$524,202
Average cost per Pupil	19.54	18.20
Six per cent. interest on present value of Land and Buildings	117,158	134,834
Grand total of cost of Schools, including six per cent. on value of Lands and Buildings	596,602	659,536
Average cost per Pupil on grand total of cost	24.81	22.87

The average cost of pupils in the High and Normal Schools, included in the above general table, was as follows:—

	High School.		Normal.	
	1871-2	1872-3	1871-2	1872-3
Cost per Pupil for Tuition	\$56.19		\$60.06	
Cost per Pupil for Janitors and Fuel	1.96		5.10	
Cost per Pupil for support of Schools	60.06		67.07	
Average cost per Pupil on grand total of cost	70.76		79.04	

The whole number of pupils in the High and Normal schools in 1872-3 was 667. Deducting the cost of those two schools for the year 1872-3, the average cost of pupils in the common schools proper, and excluding the charge for interest, was \$18 56c. 7m. (eighteen dollars, fifty-six cents, and seven mills.)

In the cost of janitors is included the wages of

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firemen, and all the expense of care of buildings. This cost does not include books, though it does that of ink, pencils, and chalk.

Note.—The foregoing expenses are of course given in United States currency. The average value of the currency dollar during the period named has been 88 cents in coin, 5 dollars coin supposed to be equal to the pound sterling.

THE END.

